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Islamic Affairs

Fourth Arab Islamic Conference Meets in Khartoum

'Arafat Speaks on Mideast Peace

LD2604195691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] The brother, leader president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] arrived in Khartoum yesterday for the popular Arab Islamic Conference. He was accompanied by brother George Habash and brother Nayif Hawatimah.

The brother president Abu-'Ammar was welcomed by Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the [Sudan] National Salvation Council.

The brother president revealed in a political speech delivered at the conference that the U.S. Administration sent a message to the leaders of the Arab nation before what had been universally termed the Gulf crisis, on 17 May, which warned against support for Iraq or against standing up to the danger of the Jewish emigration to occupied Palestine.

The brother president also stated that the U.S.-Israeli so-called peace efforts aimed at solving the Middle East issue only seek to normalize Arab-Israeli relations and the perpetual occupation and Judaizing the city of Jerusalem.

Brother Abu-'Ammar called on the nonaligned states and the Arab states to sponsor an official invitation by the PLO Central Council to the Arab League on holding a joint Arab defense council meeting in order to coordinate and supervise, along with the UN Security Council, the simultaneous destruction of the nonconventional weapons of Iraq and Israel.

Brother Abu-'Ammar also called on members of the conference to form a permanent secretariat which would meet every three or five months to follow up on what is happening, to create Arab-Islamic cohesion, and to formulate a position which protects the Arab states threatened with aggression.

Brother Abu-'Ammar asked why there is no discussion about the right to self-determination for the 6 millon Palestinians, despite the resolutions of international legitimacy, whereas there is no hesitation to give the 16,000 inhabitants of the (?Falklands) their right to self-determination.

Participants Issue 'Cairo Statement'

NC2704210591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1925 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—The fourth conference of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs has emphasized that the Gulf calamity must not mark the end of history but should be dealt with as a mere transient calamity for Muslims.

The conference issued "the Cairo Statement" today, emphasizing the need for Muslims to do everything possible to overcome the tragedy and pursue the path which protects them and their nation from loss and obliteration.

The statement indicated Islam has upheld its identity, culture, and great principles in all the conflicts and confrontations the Islamic nation has experienced throughout its history, even though some individual Muslims failed to do so. This confirms Almighty God's saying in the holy book: We have, without doubt, sent down the message; and we will assuredly guard it from corruption. [Koranic verse]

The Cairo Statement affirmed that the Islamic nation will continue to exist so it will always be an "era witness" [shahid 'asr] to the sincerity of God's promise to safeguard Islam. The nation also will continue to exist to be a landmark to the fact that God's rules to His people do not wane and that the great Islamic religion will survive irrespective of its affiliates' injustice and failure to obey God's laws.

The statement added that this nation's experiences with crises and challenges throughout its history have confirmed that falling into these crises was, in reality, a failure to observe God's laws and the religion's norms and laws.

The statement said this nation's experiences in its historical dealings with crises and challenges confirmed that Islam was never responsible for defeat; to the contrary, individual Muslims were to blame because they strayed from God's path and disregarded Islam's rules.

The Cairo Statement said that regardless of the enormity of the affliction from the Gulf crisis, the future inevitably must be brighter and greater. It notes that despite its vehemence and monstrosity, the crisis opened many eyes to the reasons behind the weakness that forced Muslims backward and prevented them from achieving their goals.

The statement added that the Gulf crisis made every member of this nation aware of matters that could not be discussed in the past. Now all of them may discuss the nation , flaws and the source of its ailment to find a remedy.

The statement noted that the crisis made the Islamic nation take charge of its own affairs, like all other nations, while firmly adhering to the Koran and the Prophet's teachings.

The statement called on the Islamic nation to conduct its dealings with a fresh resolve and new thinking that brings forth the essence of Islamic culture and presents it as a guide to the people and as an inspiration to the leaders.

The Cairo Statement emphasized that there is no room in the future world for weaklings, the backward, or the unrighteously arrogant. Nor will there be a place for

those who fail to understand the lessons of history and God's laws concerning the rise and fall of countries or for those who do not heed God's laws.

The statement affirmed that the Islamic nation experienced a historical turning point the day the Gulf war started and that this crisis must lead to a new beginning for the nation to mend its relations and strong ties so it may take its place in the forefront of nations.

Resolutions, Recommendations Issued

NC2704193491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—The Fourth Conference of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs has called for reconsidering the current security arrangements between the Arab states that are members of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] and the those that are members of the Arab League. The conference wants to establish an Islamic military force, the task of which will be to implement the verdicts of the Islamic Court of Justice and the rulings made by various arbitration forums.

In the resolutions and recommendations issued at the conclusion of its meetings today, the conference also called for reconsidering the bases, jurisdictions, and powers of the ICO and the Arab League and their affiliated institutions to ensure greater effectiveness in the tasks assigned them. Egyptian Awqaf Minister Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub chaired the meeting.

The conference also called for more coordination between the unofficial Islamic and Arab institutions and the governmental institutions. It called for strengthening cooperation and coordination between the unofficial institutions and organizations engaged in Islamic propagation and in Islamic-Arab joint action to save efforts and to prevent a duplication of efforts.

The conference recommended that the Arab and Islamic institutions, the Arab League, and the ICO urge the Islamic states to treat the citizens of every Islamic state as they treat their own citizens and not to abuse the right of sovereignty, the regulations, and necessity of security.

The conference emphasized the need for expediting the implementation of the 19th Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference resolution concerning the establishment of an Islamic Court of Justice to resolve disputes and differences, especially border problems, in accordance with the Islamic canonical law and the international conventions and charters.

The conference also underlined the need for the governments of the Islamic nations to observe the Islamic rules of neighborliness because these rules constitute one of the characteristics of the Islamic nation and a means for their interaction and unity. The conference also recommended that disputes be settled peacefully in accordance with international norms and charters and on the basis of the rules of the Islamic ideology concerning the ethics of controversy and the methods of resolving disputes as stipulated by Islam.

The conference called on the governments and peoples of the Islamic and Arab nation to resort to the principle of consultation as a basis of government and to benefit from all the human cultural experiences regarding the methods and procedures that ensure the fulfillment of the goals of Islam in ruling through consultation.

The conference recommended that Islamic and international charters be implemented, particularly those pertaining to human rights, which Islam views as mandatory, not as mere privileges.

The conference recommended that Islam's special characteristics and identity regarding culture and education be maintained in all Islamic countries, that these be Arabized and standardized whenever possible, and that the recommendations of the first international conference for Islamic education and other conferences be implemented. The recommendation emphasized the need to concentrate on Islamic culture in the various educational programs, to formulate curriculums that ensure structuring the Muslim individual on the basis of the noble Islamic values and ideals, and to exchange [word indistinct] and coordinate among the scientific institutions in the fields of natural and technical sciences.

The conference called on the specialized Muslim 'ulema to enlighten the Muslims about the constant Islamic rules and basic principles and to deal with the disputed issues in a manner that will preserve the Islamic nation's unity. It also called for dealing with the current issues in a manner consistent with the spirit of Islamic tolerance.

The conference emphasized the importance of caring for Muslim youth in a manner that will enable them to assimilate Islam as an ideology, a canonical law, and a way of conduct through objective curriculums, informative programs, youth activities, cultural and sports clubs, and youth centers.

The conference also recommended that action be taken to achieve economic integration among all Islamic and Arab peoples based on Islamic fraternity. It also emphasized every state's sovereignty over its natural resources, both in the ownership of these resources and their distribution.

The conference suggested a comprehensive study be made of the Islamic nation's resources and its economic needs. Furthermore, it instructed that those needs be prioritized to achieve economic integration. The establishment of an Islamic common market was another issue to be studied.

The conference recommended encouraging the investment of Islamic capital in Islamic countries and in projects by Muslims in other countries. It called for

securing the appropriate atmosphere and necessary guarantees for such investments and for standardizing these guarantees to provide wider scopes for investing Islamic surplus funds in Islamic development projects and to ensure sufficient guarantees for the protection of these funds against the risks of loss or squandering.

The conference recommended that the Islamic nation's peoples and governments make the Palestinian issue their central cause because the al-Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, and Palestine are the greatest trusts for which all Muslims are responsible. It called on the Islamic states to exert utmost efforts with the international community to uphold the principle of international legitimacy, which the international community has been observing, to implement the UN Security Council resolutions on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state.

The conference also recommended supporting the Afghan people's jihad by all possible means that will help them to succeed and achieve victory. It called on all the Afghan groups to unite their ranks to achieve their aspirations.

The conference underlined the al-Ta'if conference resolutions as the only way to resolve the Lebanese problem and called on all the Lebanese people to implement these resolutions and to rally around their legitimate government. It called on the peoples and governments in the world to implement UN Security Council resolutions concerning the liberation of south Lebanon from the Israeli occupation in accordance with the principle of international legitimacy.

The conference also called on the Islamic states to exert efforts with the international community to implement the UN Security Council resolutions and other UN resolutions concerning the Kashmir issue. It appealed to the Islamic states to hasten and help the Muslim people in (?Albania) in an appropriate way.

The conference also recommended that more effort be exerted to safeguard the rights of Muslim minorities in all non-Muslim countries in a manner that will preserve their Islamic identity and protect them against being obliterated in the non-Muslim societies.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Official Criticizes U.S., USSR, Israel

LD2804221191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Brother Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, says that the Soviet Union conveyed Palestinian ideas to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The Soviet Union also conveyed the U.S. answers to the PLO. He added that the results were very limited.

Brother 'Abd Rabbuh said that in the light of our talks with Soviet officials, we do not believe Moscow will be establishing diplomatic relations with Israel and that the resumption of these relations is linked to the convening of an international conference and the participation of all sides in it.

Brother 'Abd Rabbuh explained that Washington is not trying to apply pressure on Israel to make it moderate its position. It is actually applying pressure on the Arab sides involved.

Central Council Favors Resuming U.S. Dialogue

PM2904090991 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Apr 91 p 4

[Report by Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi: "Palestine National (as published) Council Recommends Revival of Dialogue Between PLO and United States"]

[Text] High-ranking Palestinian sources have confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Palestine Central Council, which concluded its proceedings in Tunis the evening before last, recommended the opening of new horizons for the dialogue with the United States and with the five permanent member states of the Security Council and the European states in particular, to resolve the Palestinian issue on just and comprehensive bases in accordance with UN resolutions.

The sources pointed out that the Palestinian delegation, comprised of Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, and Sulayman Najjab, which met in Moscow yesterday with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, asked the Soviet Union to press its endeavors to secure the resumption of the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue broken off unilaterally by Washington.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the Palestine Central Council discussed that subject in detail. The council members emphasized that in the present circumstances, dialogue with the United States is important and fundamental.

The Palestine Central Council regarded the three meetings held in the occupied territories between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and a Palestinian delegation as an important step toward reviving the PLO-U.S. dialogue.

Meanwhile, the sources emphasized to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the PLO is currently making great efforts to restore the bridges of dialogue with the United States to speed up the process of finding a just solution to the Palestinian issue, in view of Washington's various means of pressuring Israel.

The sources said the Soviet-Palestinian and Soviet-U.S. talks in Moscow are a form of indirect U.S.-PLO negotiations.

The sources pointed out the 'Arafat-Dumas meeting in Libya and the Soviet-Palestinian talks in Moscow constitute a strong regional involvement in the settlement process.

Algeria

Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz Arrives in Algiers

LD2704111591 Algiers APS in English 1012 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Algiers, 27/04/91 (APS)—The Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz arrived on Friday [26 April] in Algiers in the frame of a tour he will pay to the Maghreb. "My visit in Algeria comes in the frame of the carrying on of the concertation and the exchange of points of view between our two countries on questions of common interest and to inform Algeria about the evolution of the situation in Iraq" the Iraqi deputy premier declared at this arrival in Algiers.

Regarding the situation prevailing in Iraq and notably in the north of the country, Tariq 'Aziz stressed that the West increased the Kurdish question and intefered in Iraq's internal affairs and violated its sovereignty in order to destablize it. The West, he said, aims at maintaining this situation because the question can be settled down.

"We could solve it, and we can still settle it down, notably following the accord concluded with the Kurdish leaders who have expressed their disagreement vis-a-vis the Western actions towards the Kurdish refugees. There is then an Iraqi global national will to resolve the question and a possibility of settlement exists, under the condition that Americans and the Westerners stop to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs", he added.

To a question relating to the losses undergone by Iraq during the aggression of the allied forces, Tariq 'Aziz indicated that it is difficult to assess them and to give figures about this topic, pointing out that the disaster was global and considerable because the aggression aimed at the total destruction of Iraq.

Talks between Sid Ahmed Ghozali, Algerian foreign affairs minister and Tariq 'Aziz started yesterday evening.

Meets With Bendjedid

LD2704211291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Interview with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by correspondent (Zarif 'Abd El Rahmane) in Algiers on 27 April—recorded]

[Text] Today President Chadli Bendjedid received Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, who conveyed to the president a message from Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. After his departure from the president's office, the Iraqi official gave our colleague (Zarif 'Abd El Rahmane) the following interview:

['Aziz] I had the honor of meeting President Chadli Bendjedid and I conveyed to him a verbal message from his brother President Saddam Husayn.

The message included informing President Bendjedid about the development of the situation in Iraq and what Iraq suffered from the aggression and criminal actions schemed abroad. We also talked about the Arab situation.

Concerning the situation in Iraq, in spite of all the losses that your brothers in Iraq have suffered as a result of the unjust US-NATO aggression, I would like to reassure you that Iraq is well. Iraq is safe and still has confidence in the present and the future. Like you here in Algeria, we believe that the Arab nation is a living nation and what it suffers in material losses during this phase, will not affect its commitment and will to advance and progress. The Arab nation is able to advance and progress because it is a living nation. This has been proved by experience during hundreds, even thousands, of years.

Comments on Shi'ites, Kurds

LD2704202291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Interview with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by correspondent (Zarif Abd El Rahmane) in Algiers on 27 April; includes announcer's introduction—recorded]

[Text] The Syrian-Iranian talks also included discussion of the situation in Iraq, where Shiite and Kurdish rebellions occurred in the north and south in the wake of the Gulf war.

It is known that the Kurdish and Shiite opposition movements reside in Syria and Iran.

The EEC foreign ministers today started a meeting in Luxembourg dedicated to European political unity, the Middle East problems, and the possibilities available now for the Kurds after the agreement signed recently in Baghdad between the Iraqi Government and the Kurdish opposition.

A question arises on this occasion: What have the negotiations between Baghdad and the Kurds achieved? Colleague (Zarif Abd el Rahmane) asked this question of Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Tarif 'Aziz on the occasion of his presence in Algeria. He said:

['Aziz] Through mutual understanding, a delegation representing the Kurdish partisan leaders, headed by Mr. Jalal al-Talabani, visited Baghdad. A dialogue took place last week. I personally witnessed part of it. The dialogue was amicable, positive, and constructive. The delegation met President Saddam Husayn, and it was announced in Baghdad that it has been agreed in principle to carry out joint national action on the basis of the statement of 11 March 1970—the statement announced by the revolution itself, headed by President Saddam Husayn personally when he was a deputy president.

You know, however, that the United States and the Western powers, which exploited this issue in a way which does not stem from commitment to the Kurds

either humanely or politically but from the wish to destabilize and weaken Iraq, from the wish to distract attention from the tragedy of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian issue, and the wish to accuse an Arab country of the so-called persecution of the Kurds.

[Announcer] Is there a Shiite problem in Iraq? If there is such a problem, does it have any relation to the Kurdish problem? What is the extent of the Iranian intereference in the Iraqi internal affairs? These questions were answered by Tariz 'Aziz:

['Aziz] The Kurdish issues cannot be compared to the so-called Shiite issue. From a political point of view, in fact, there is no Shiite issue. As for the Kurdish issue, yes, it exists, because there is an ethnic situation, an ethnic difference in language and culture which requires special political and legal means of dealing with it within the framework of the one country.

I say, therefore, that there are no Shiite problems in Iraq. The problem is the external intervention. There is a regime in Iran which adopts sectarianism as a course of political action. That regime would like to spread this bad tendency by all means. It has exploited the difficult circumstances which Iraq has gone through during and after the aggression. There were very difficult circumstances, as you appreciate. The Iranian regime has sent agents trained to spread sabotage and chaos to a number of southern governorates in Iraq. This matter, however, has been closed and security, stability, and normal life have been restored to these areas.

There are sectarian parties linked to Iran. These parties, however, have no real base among the Iraqi people. If they had a base they would have been able to reassert themselves during the most difficult circumstances in Iraqi history. The success of the Iraqi leadership in destroying the sedition under very difficult circumstances and with very limited resources, confirm that these sectarians, who exploit the sectarian issues to divide the unity of the people, have no popularity.

UK Claims of Plans To Build Bomb Denied

LD2804215791 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] After the AMERICAN TIMES [as heard] and the WASHINGTON POST, this time it is the turn of the London SUNDAY TIMES. A propaganda campaign is being fabricated by the Western information media against Algeria about preparations for building a nuclear reactor with China's help.

The [Algerian] newspaper EL-MASA this evening published the SUNDAY TIMES' article, which speaks of Algeria's preparation to produce an atom bomb. It claims that with China's help, Algeria has embarked upon a secret plan to produce the first atom bomb in the Arab world.

The SUNDAY TIMES bases its article on rumors disseminated by the former military attache of the British Embassy in Algeria, who was expelled by the Algerian authorities on 10 April after he was found, according to the aforementioned newspaper, near the imaginary nuclear plant south of Algiers.

On the basis of these fantasies, related by the former British military attache at the British Embassy in Algeria, British intelligence plans to inform British Prime Minister John Major of these hysterical and unfounded fantasies, which were officially refuted by the Algerian and Chinese authorities.

The truth of the matter concerning this Western information campaign against our country by the Western intelligence services is that in no way whatsoever could it be separated from the principled stand taken by Algeria, particularly in regard to the Gulf war. As well as the constant attitudes Algeria adopts in the international arena in the current atmosphere of total international concentration on the new world order, which the United States wants to impose on the world and to subjugate it to what the Algerian foreign minister has called a world dictatorship based on material power.

Medical, Emergency Aid Planned for Kurds

LD2704222191 Algiers Domestic Service in French 1800 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] On the subject of humanitarian support for Iraq, Algerian volunteers—doctors and paramedics—will leave urgently for northern Iraq to participate in the humanitarian medical action for the Kurdish population. An Algerian Medical Union communique announced this today. This decision follows an agreement in principle concluded in Baghdad between Mr. Djamel Ould Abbas, the president of the Algerian Medical Union, and the representative of the United Nations organizing the humanitarian action coordinated by UNICEF.

Another matter—Euro-Algerian aid for Iraq. A total of 36 tonnes of emergency aid will be transported from Brussels to Baghdad via Amman, announces an Algerian Red Crescent communique. The first cargo plane chartered by the Red Crescent, the Algerian Committee of Support for the Iraqi People, and the Algerian Association for the Protection of Maladjusted Children, left yesterday. A second load is scheduled for 3 May, a third is envisaged during the next few weeks.

Egypt

Swiss Official Arrives To Discuss Peace, Debt

NC2804044191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—Klaus Jacobi, state secretary in the Swiss Foreign Ministry, arrived in Cairo this evening on a three-day visit to Egypt.

In an arrival statement, the Swiss official stated that his visit is part of Swiss endeavors to establish peace in the Middle East. He said Switzerland welcomes the convening of an international or regional conference for peace on its neutral territories, similar to the Baker-'Aziz meeting that was held in January. He said that during his visit he will meet with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs; Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of state for cabinet affairs; and Dr. Maurice Makramallah, minister of state for international cooperation.

The Swiss guest was received at the airport by Assistant Foreign Minister Ambassador Fawzi al-Abrashi.

Conveys Offer To Host Talks

LD2704220191 Bern International Service in English 2130 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Switzerland has repeated an offer to host a Middle East peace conference. The state secretary in the Swiss Foreign Ministry, Klaus Jacobi, reiterated the Swiss offer shortly after arriving in Egypt for a three-day official visit. He said his visit came within the framework of Switzerland's efforts to help achieve a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mr. Jacobi will on Sunday meet Egypt's minister of state for foreign affairs, Butrus Ghali, for talks expected to center on developments in the Middle East following the Gulf war.

Views Talks With 'Abd-al-Majid

NC2804153191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1347 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 28 Apr (MENA)—Following the round of talks he held today with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Klaus Jacobi, state secretary in the Swiss Foreign Ministry, said that his country is willing to host and organize a Middle East peace conference if the concerned parties decide to hold one.

He added that three venues have been proposed for this conference: Washington, Cairo, and Geneva. He said that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid told him that Egypt has no objection if the conference is held in Geneva.

The Swiss minister said that he discussed Middle East and Gulf developments with Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid. He added that his visit to Egypt comes in the wake of a tour during which he visited Jordan, Syria, and Israel. He noted that he sensed the desire of all parties to achieve peace in the Middle East during this tour. He stressed the need to exert strong efforts to hold a peace conference, be it international or regional.

Klaus Jacobi said that he discussed with Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid bilateral economic relations and what Switzerland could do to help bolster and develop the Egyptian economy. He noted that an agreement was reached to turn the Swiss loans to Egypt, which total 44 million Swiss Francs, into a grant in addition to turning half a Swiss loan of $60 million into a grant. He added that the Swiss parliament approved an allocation of $100 million as aid to the countries most affected by the Gulf war; namely, Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt. He noted that each country has received $25 million and that there are $2 million as reserves. [all figures as received]

The Swiss official stressed that there is complete understanding and agreement between the two countries on the issues discussed.

Sudanese Irrigation Minister Arrives on Visit

NC2704101691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1016 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—Sudanese Irrigation Minister Dr. Ya'qub Abu-Shura arrived in Cairo from Khartoum this morning for a four-day visit. He was received at the airport by Engineer 'Isam Radi, minister of works and water resources. [passage omitted]

Talks on Water Resources Open

NC2704131791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1128 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—Egyptian-Sudanese talks on ways to develop the water resources of the two countries opened in Cairo this morning. The Egyptian delegation is led by 'Isam Radi, minister of works and water resources, and the Sudanese delegation is led by that country's irrigation minister, Dr. Ya'qub Abu-Shura.

Minister Radi said that the talks involved a full review of projects and studies on the utilization of water resources. The two countries discussed the best methods to use the waters of the Nile, as well as aspects of technical cooperation among the countries through which the river passes.

The Egyptian delegation to the talks includes Engineer Muhammad Nasir 'Izzat, head of the Egyptian delegation to the joint technical board on the Nile River waters. The Sudanese side includes Engineer Najib Makki Hamad, head of the Sudanese delegation to the same board.

The Sudanese delegation will remain in Egypt for four days during which it will visit a number of irrigation and drainage projects.

Kuwait

Ministry Welcomes U.S. Peace Conference Moves

LD2704175491 (Clandestine) Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] A Foreign Ministry statement has asserted that Kuwait is following with great interest and appreciation U.S. efforts to convene an early peace conference to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and bring about a just and comprehensive settlement for the Palestinian problem. The statement also stressed that the time has come for serious and strenuous efforts, as well as good and sincere intentions to bring about the desired solution.

The statement added that Kuwait thinks that these efforts are a serious move stemming from international legality, within the framework of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Kuwait, while welcoming, supporting, and appreciating such efforts, particularly the sincere moves of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, hopes that a just and comprehensive peace will prevail in the region for the sake of peace and stability, as well as prosperity and progress for its people following years of destructive conflict.

Editorial Views Change in Kuwaiti Cabinet

PM2604162791 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Apr 91 p 13

[Editorial: "New Kuwaiti Cabinet"]

[Text] It is useful to call things by their names and say that what has happened in Kuwait is not a modification but, rather, a decisive change in Kuwait's political experience. In the new Cabinet the venerable chief of Arab diplomacy, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, has been replaced by Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim as deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

And in the new Cabinet there are new and old faces. It reflects a lot of meanings that require reflection and consideration and that are known to anyone who follows the development of political life in Kuwait.

But the important question is: What is the new Cabinet's first task? That is the most important thing and the major concern of the Kuwaiti citizens, who suffered, who were made homeless, and who lost their homeland from 2 August until it was liberated. And, when they returned, found it a wasteland. The prosperous, once-exemplary country now needs the simple elements of life as badly as any country in the world.

People who are concerned about Kuwait believe that the true stage of tireless work has started in order to rebuild Kuwait. The immediate process is one of helping individuals before reconstructing the buildings, the streets, and the various services. Helping individuals means uniting the national front as a whole for the sake of restoring a living and prosperous Kuwait that can utilize its economic and human capabilities and political vitality for the sake of that sincere national action.

Undoubtedly numerous voices have emerged from here and there to talk about the Cabinet's nature and members. And the names suggested before and since all reflect legitimate questions familiar to the Kuwaiti and Gulf scene, which has the ability to absorb them and develop them for the better.

But the most notable thing in that political measure is that a decisive change has occurred in Kuwait's political life—a change that responds to the stage ahead and to the present breakdown and fulfills the wishes of Kuwait, as it moves toward broad horizons on which the rebuilding process accords well with the reform process.

That also means that what is required is to give the new Cabinet the opportunity to work, as it has clearly pledged to work for the sake of development, which is a complex process whose tasks and responsibilities can only be carried out by those who unhesitatingly pledge themselves to do that. Those who work make more mistakes than others. But those who adopt a spectator's attitude and draw the lines of the present on the sand dunes are the ones that easily abandon their responsibilities.

The present Cabinet has pledged itself to work and to rebuild the political structure in its country.

Those who are sincere must urge it onto that path. It should utilize its experience, and should be given the opportunity to do so.

Council of Ministers Meets on Serving Citizens

LD2904052191 London KUNA in Arabic 1813 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 28 Apr (KUNA)—This morning the Council of Ministers held at the headquarters of the Council of Ministers a meeting under the chairmanship of His Highness the Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah. Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Dhari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman announced the following: [passage omitted] In completing the address of his highness the heir apparent and the prime minister to the ministers in the previous meeting about the concerns of the government at this stage and the priorities of work in it, his highness urged the ministers to increase their efforts and make available all energies to face the existing challenges and provide the necessary services to the citizens. [passage omitted]

His highness also emphasized the rewarding of those who work hard, and bringing to account those who do not, to consecrate the principle of reward and retribution in all the government organs. [passage omitted]

The council discussed measures related to the payments of the salaries of the Kuwaiti civil servants working in ministries and in government authorities and establishments and bodies affiliated to them. The first installment of these payments will be made in the next two weeks.

They will represent the salaries for four months of the previous period, starting with the date of the Iraqi vicious invasion of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The council completed the setting up of ad-hoc ministerial committees, and, proceeding from the interest of his highness the crown prince and prime minister in the situation of the innocent hostages held prisoner by the authorities of the Iraqi regime, the council decided to form a ministerial committee composed of the minister of justice and legal affairs, information, interior, and defense to be in charge of following up the situation of the prisoners and detainees and to seek to secure all that is necessary to guarantee their safety and their return to their homeland and families as quickly as possible, in cooperation with the concerned international bodies. [passage omitted]

The council heard a briefing by Petroleum Minister Hamud 'Abdallah al-Ruqba on the results of the recent visit to the country by UK Secretary of State for Energy Wakeham and the topics discussed during this visit aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation in the domain of oil and fighting the fires in oil wells, and contribution to the reconstruction of Kuwait, and the boosting of the strong relations existing between the two fraternal countries. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Further on Visit by Iran's Foreign Minister

Meets With King Fahd

NC2704054091 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Continuing his meetings and talks with Saudi officials, Mr. Velayati, our country's foreign minister who is in Jeddah heading a high-ranking political delegation, met with King Fahd last night to discuss matters of mutual interest. During the meeting, which lasted over an hour, our foreign minister pointed to the steps both countries have taken to expand relations. He emphasized the significance of the hajj ceremonies to the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressed the hope that the hajj ceremonies this year are carried out in the best way possible.

Our foreign minister described the principled and humanitarian stand adopted by the nation and government of the Islamic Republic of Iran toward the Iraqi refugees. Referring to the extensive needs of the Iraqi refugees, he described international assistance as minimal.

In his remarks, King Fahd expressed the Saudi Government's readiness to assist the Iranian pilgrims in performing their hajj pilgrimage duties in the best way possible. He also pointed to Saudi Arabia's efforts to help the refugees.

Referring to the significance of relations between the two countries and of their geographical location, King Fahd described the convening of a joint Iranian-Saudi economic commission as a positive and important step toward the consolidation and expansion of bilateral relations.

Mr. Velayati then held a second round of talks with Saudi Foreign Minister Mr. Sa'ud al-Faysal. During this meeting, the two sides discussed the topics raised during the first round of talks and during the talks between King Fahd and Mr. Velayati.

Fahd To Visit Tehran

LD2704085591 Tehran IRNA in English 0651 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 27, IRNA—King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Friday said both Iran and Saudi Arabia enjoy a special status and play a key role in Asia, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region in particular.

Speaking in a meeting with the visiting Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the Saudi king added that greater understanding between the two countries will have significant impact on Muslim nations.

The Saudi king welcomed bilateral economic cooperation and said formation of a joint economic commission is a positive and benefitial step towards further promotion of relations.

Velayati who arrived in Jeddah at the head of a delegation last Thursday [25 April] said Iran was interested in an overall improvement of Tehran-Riyadh relations.

Stressing importance of hajj rituals, Velayati expressed hope that this year's ceremony will be held in the best possible manner.

More than 110,000 Iranian pilgrims will go to Mecca for the hajj rituals next month, the first time since the 1987 Mecca massacre in which some 400 pilgrims mainly Iranians were martyred by the Saudi police. Following the incident Tehran-Riyadh ties were severed.

Turning to Iran's humanitarian attitude towards over one million Iraqi refugees, Velayati said that the international assistance has been very little concerning the scope of the catastrophe.

King Fahd said his country will campaign to collect donations for the refugees and will urge world nations and organizations to take serious measures and help ease the plight of the refugees.

King Fahd conveyed his sincere greetings to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani of Iran and expressed hope to visit Tehran at an appropriate opportunity. He also voiced Saudi Government's readiness to hold the hajj rituals in the best possible manner.

Later, Velayati held the second round of talks with his Saudi, counterpart Sa'ud al-Faysal. The first round of talks were held Thursday evening.

Velayati Departs

LD2704133391 Riyadh SPA in English 1229 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Jeddah, April 27, SPA—Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received here last night Iranian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati and the accompanying delegation.

The audience was attended by Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, Badr Bakhsh, the Saudi charge d'affairs in Tehran, and Mohammad Frazmet, the Iranian charge d'affairs in the kingdom.

Meanwhile, Velayati expressed appreciation for the warm reception given to him by the Saudi officials.

A new page has been opened in the Saudi-Iranian relations, Velayati was quoted by the radio of Tehran as saying.

Velayati expressed concern and anxiety about the homeless and displaced Iraqis and hoped that they would soon return to their homeland.

Meanwhile, Velayati and the accompanying delegation left Jeddah last night after a visit to the kingdom.

He was seen of at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz International Airport by Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister and a number of senior officials.

Letter to King Fahd Demands Reforms

JN2604105491 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 25 Mar 91 p 6

["Exclusive" report: "The Winds of Democracy Blow on the Saudis! Saudi Personalities Ask King Fahd for Greater Participation in Power!"]

[Text] Geneva—There are indications of certain changes in Gulf and Saudi public opinion trends on the subject of participation in political life. It is obvious that these trends will interact and develop following the Kuwaiti opposition's call on the al-Sabah family to give up their government portfolios and be satisfied with high, perhaps cermonial, leadership posts.

Within this context, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is no longer far from this. AKHIR KHABAR has obtained the text of the letter in which political personalities respected by all, including the ruling family, demand participation in power. It is noteworthy that the signatories represent the principal tribes in the Arabian Peninsula.

The letter, addressed to King Fahd, contains points for limited reform points by reconsideration of the system of government and modernization of the judiciary, education, the status of women, and citizens' rights. The letter was signed by 43 Saudi personalities, including Muhammad 'Abduh Yamani, Dr. Rashid al-Mubarak, Muhammad Hasan Faqiy, Dr. 'Abdallah Manna', Muhammad Sa'id Tayyib, 'Abdallah al-Saykhan, Muhammad 'Ubayd al-Harbi, and others. We are publishing excerpts from this letter due to its importance:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, may he have God's support, peace, mercy, and blessings:

The crucial circumstances and painful events which the region and the nation are going through, with our homeland at its very heart, events which occurred suddenly and violently with the occupation of Kuwait and the displacement of its people...are a serious warning. That makes it the prime duty of every citizen to give advice to those in charge on what he thinks is right and to share work and views with them on whatever he believes to be in the interest of the homeland, which belongs to all, since they bear jointly the responsibility of building it and since they share its fortunes and misfortunes.

Proceeding from our commitment to the righteous Shari'ah, our love for and loyalty to the leaders, and out of loyalty to this homeland and the general public, we believe it is our duty to submit to you the gist of views and frameworks aimed at cementing the foundations of this homeland and enhancing its march toward more progress in a manner that anticipates events and does not follow the method of simply reacting to them, with a view to fulfilling a major objective represented in the following:

Consolidation of full application of the righteous Shari'ah, which has been the kingdom's policy since its establishment, with the aim of achieving the Shari'ah's higher objectives of justice, equality, reform, and granting of rights where rights are due, and thus give our society a noble image of a modern Islamic state and make it an example to be followed in the implementation of great Islam.

Adherence to the existing ruling system, and maintaining the noble royal family as a symbol of loyality, a pillar of unity, and a just ruler in the interest of the country and the nation—removed from being the subject of scrutiny or disagreement, or a cause of criticism, or a means of obstructing or surpassing the system. Following is the gist:

First: Laying down an organizational framework for religious ruling [fatwa], taking into consideration the true, infallible, and unchangeable Shari'ah as represented in the decisive texts in the Book [Koran] and the Sunnah [Prophet Muhammad's sayings]. Any other jurisprudence, 'ulema views, interpretations, and fatwas are only human endeavors to interpret the Shari'ah influenced by the understanding, knowledge, and work of the people involved in and influenced by the factors of time and place. They therefore, could be right or wrong

and subject to question. That is why it is unanimously believed that no one, whoever he may be, can monopolize defining the will of God and the prophet as set out in the Koran and Sunnah, or can exclusively determine the Shari'ah rules and impose them on the whole nation.

What is required is that we should, in a practical and decisive way, differentiate between the provisions of the divine Shari'ah, which is infallible and must be accepted and carried out, and the human views and interpretations of the 'ulema, which must be open to examination, assessment, and question without any restrictions or limitations. We should take from the past and present doctrines and views of the 'ulema what would help us make our country an honorable example of the modern Islamic state and a model in the implementation of the tolerant Shari'ah.

Second: Examining the state of the basic system of government in light of the statements and declarations made by leaders at various times.

Third: Embarking on the formation of a consultative [shura] council from qualified and knowledgeable people known for their honesty, impartiality, good conduct, and record of good work in the interest of the country, hailing from various parts of the country. Its duties should include study, development, and approval of the rules and regulations related to all economic, political, educational, and other affairs, and control the work and responsibility of the executive authorities.

Fourth: Reviving the municipal councils, implementing the districts system, and extension of the chambers of commerce experiment to other professions.

Fifth: Examining all levels, aspects, and powers of the judiciary, modernizing its systems, reviewing its programs of training judges and assistants, and introducing whatever is necessary to ensure its independence, effectiveness, fairness, influence, and firmness. Institutes for that important field should be open to all citizens, and should not be exclusive to one group, in accordance with the principle of equal opportunity under the true Shari'ah.

Six: Establishing complete equality among citizens in all fields without any discrimination on the basis of race, family, sect, or social status and establishing the principle that no citizen should be jeopardized in any way without a Shari'ah ruling.

Seven: Reviewing the state of the media in accordance with a precise, comprehensive law that reflects the latest achievements made by similar laws in the world in order to enable all forms of the Saudi media to exercise their freedoms to call for and propagate virtue, forbid sin, and enrich dialogue in an open Muslim society.

Eight: Enacting a comprehensive reform of the associations of the propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice and introducing specific regulations governing their work with a legal description of their task, and setting strict rules for selecting their members and leaders to ensure the application of the method of wisdom and good advice and achievement of the objectives desired from that sensitive branch.

Nine: While we believe that looking after the new generations is the noblest task of the Muslim woman, we also believe that there are many fields of public life which can be opened up to female citizens to participate in within the framework of the righteous Shari'ah, out of respect for and in acknowledgement of their role in building the society.

Ten: All of God's books and prophets have come to teach and educate mankind. This shows the extreme importance of education as an indispensable basis for the progress of nations and peoples. We believe that the educational system in our country needs a radical, comprehensive reform to produce faithful generations that are qualified to make a positive, effective contribution to building the homeland's present and future and capable of facing the challenges of the age and enabling the nation catch up with nations that are considerably ahead of it in all fields.

These are the outlines of views which still need much study and more details. Like your citizens, you undoubtedly think and care about them. We have pledged to God to be honest with you and sincerely open our hearts to you in fulfillment of God's will and out of love and loyalty, because the Arab and Islamic worlds and the international community as a whole are entering a new era in which concepts, conditions, and balances have changed, thus requiring us to reconsider some of our affairs objectively and reexamine our conditions sincerely and effectively in order to face the events and problems of the future.

We must add that the signatories are a group of your citizens, brothers and sons, who, you know perfectly well, bear no grudge and have no ulterior motives or personal interests or ambitions. Right, good, and the supreme interest are their purpose. The preservation of this entity and maintenance of its stability, security, and safety are their first and foremost objective.

Saddam Husayn Allows Iraqis To Travel Abroad

JN2604152091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1504 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has issued an order allowing Iraqis to travel outside the country as of 15 May.

INA has learned that President Saddam Husayn ordered the arrangements for this decision and the setting up of appropriate practical regulations to implement it without detracting from its purpose.

RCC Decision Disbands Popular Army

JN2604155491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1538 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Apr (INA)—The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a decision disbanding the Popular Army. Following is the text of the decision:
In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.
The Revolution Command Council.
Decision No. 118.
Date: 9 Shawwal 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 24 April 1991.

Decision

In accordance with the provisions of Paragraph A of Article No. 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

First, the Popular Army, formed in accordance with RCC Decision No. 355, dated 3 April 1974, shall be disbanded. The commands of the Popular Army of the administrative regions contained in RCC Decision No. 306 of 1 August 1990, shall also be disbanded.

Second, the Defense Ministry shall liquidate the property of the disbanded Popular Army.

Third, this decision shall be published in the official gazette, and competent authorities shall implement it.
[Signed] Saddam Husayn, RCC chairman

Meeting With U.S. Officers at Safwan Reported

JN2604204291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Iraqi and U.S. officers convened a UN-sponsored meeting in Safwan today to work out details of the deployment of UN observers at the border between Iraq and Kuwait. AFP reported that the meeting lasted for one hour and took place at one of the positions run by the UN observer team, which began deploying the day before yesterday along the border between Iraq and Kuwait.

Kurdish Leader Barzani Views Baghdad Agreement

NC2604145791 Paris AFP in English 1448 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 26 (AFP)—A key Iraqi Kurdish rebel chief here Friday hailed the agreement in principle reached earlier this week in Baghdad, saying it brought "great hope for the Iraqi people and our Kurdish people."

Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK), said "major steps had been taken" regarding the implementation of the 1970 agreement on Kurdish autonomy, democracy in Iraq and the abolition of anti-Kurdish laws.

It was Mr. Barzani's first public reaction on the agreement, announced Wednesday in the Iraqi capital by another key rebel leader, Jalal Talabani, who met President Saddam Husayn.

The DPK chief and Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, had been holding talks since Thursday night to examine the accord.

"We'll review this agreement in detail this week, to pave the way for the signing of a new accord," Mr. Barzani said. The accord bought "great hope for the Iraqi people and our Kurdish people."

Baghdad penned an agreement with Kurdish rebel leaders in 1970 granting the Kurds autonomy in the north but the accord was never fully implemented.

The latest accord was hailed by several Kurdish leaders but received with skepticism by the United States and Britain who are setting up refugee camps for Kurds in northern Iraq.

In Damascus, the Islamic Action Organization (IAO), an Iraqi Shi'ite opposition group, charged that Kurdish rebels were "giving fictitious arguments for the talks while the uprising is at a delicate stage."

"Such accords will permit Saddam Husayn's forces to concentrate their blows against the rebelling people in the center and south of Iraq. The regime usually undermines the opposition's unity with separate agreements," it said.

Shiite rebels have said the Kurds were jeopardizing an opposition accord aimed at toppling the Iraqi president.

Islamic Opposition Decries Kurdish-Regime Talks

NC2704162591 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Formerly Voice of Free Iraq]

Text] A spokesman for the Iraqi Islamic opposition said in Damascus that the Kurdistan Front is giving false justifications for holding negotiations with the tyrant's regime at this sensitive stage of the uprising. The

spokesman stressed that the tyrant's regime is preparing to launch a wide-scale offensive against the uprising forces in southern several towns.

Kurdish Radio Asks Government To Respect Accord

NC2704190491 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1740 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Excerpts] The Iraqi nation and people have experienced numerous tragedies and ordeals due to the Kurdish problem and the fighting which has raged almost continuously for well over 30 years between forces of the Kurdish revolution and successive Iraqi governments. The Kurdish revolution did not occur in a vacuum or without justification. It was the result of the tragic, thorny circumstances through which the Kurdish people have been passing.

The Kurdish revolution has waged a continuous struggle in defense of the aspirations and hopes of this nation, a nation that always has struggled so its sons could live on their own land and enjoy legitimate rights as other nations do. This issue has become the principal problem for successive Iraqi governments, considering how these governments dealt with the issue. From the early 1960's to date, Iraqi governments have tried to obliterate the Kurdish revolution and wipe out the aspirations of the Kurdish people with iron and fire. They have disregarded the legitimate rights and just demands of the Kurdish people and revolution and ignored any chance for a peaceful solution. Their stand has led to a continuous state of instability and lack of security in Iraq.

The successive Iraqi governments did not try to work out an ideal formula with the Kurdish revolution to solve this problem in a comprehensive and lasting manner guaranteeing the legitimate rights of the Kurdish people. In fact, the Iraqi governments always tried to evade any comprehensive and just solution and only tried to reach partial and temporary solutions. This led to [words indistinct] and the just Kurdish issue, but they always partially recognize the rights of the Kurdish people to evade other crises which swept Iraq. The Iraqi governments withdrew their partial recognition once the crises were over.

This unrealistic and illogical handling of the Kurdish issue has created a lack of confidence between the Kurdish people and the Iraqi governments and consequently led to the outbreak of fighting in Kurdistan and the devastation of Kurdistan, its land, and its people. [passage omitted]

Now that the Kurdish opposition and the Iraqi Government have reached an agreement in principle that would, should the current negotiations continue, resolve the Kurdish issue in Iraq, it behooves the Iraqi Government, if it is serious about establishing a just and lasting solution to the Kurdish issue in Iraq, to work seriously to eliminate the vestiges of the years of bitter fighting, lift the emergency situation in Kurdistan, and guarantee without any doubt the legitimate rights of the Kurdish people. The Iraqi Government should not try to reach temporary solutions to the issue to evade the other crises and return to fighting and destruction. This would exacerbate the situation and generate catastrophes and [words indistinct] who will make huge sacrifices for the sake of their legitimate rights.

Groups Urge Barzani To Close 'Loophole'

NC2704152591 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1300 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Formerly Voice of Free Iraq]

[Text] In their second day of talks in London, the Iraqi national forces and opposition parties have decided to issue a call to Mas'ud Barzani—whose eagerness to preserve the unity of the forces opposing the regime of tyrant Saddam Husayn is well known—and urge him to move carefully and patiently in the talks between Kurdish groups and the regime of the defeated tyrant Saddam Husayn. They are doing so to close the loophole through which that regime is trying to reach a new high ground and avoid imminent collapse.

The Iraqi National Front members meeting in London (?hope) that Barzani will respond positively and thus deny the tyrant's regime an opportunity to fracture the unity of the national forces.

Muhsin Bizzi, member of the political bureau of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK], commented on the current talks between a DPK delegation and the tyrant's regime by saying that he and other DPK officials have advised DPK leader Barzani to take more time and act carefully before signing any agreement with the unreliable regime of the tyrant. They also urged him to consult with other opposition groups.

Certain Iraqi opposition sources described the agreement between some Kurdish groups and tyrant Saddam Husayn as an open door for the tyrant's forces to attack the opposition. All opposition forces agree that the only way to end Iraq's ordeal is for Saddam to get out of the government.

A DPK spokesman has called on the United Nations to provide guarantees for the agreement recently signed in Baghdad. The spokesman voiced his distrust of the tyrant and said that any agreement should allow the United Nations to intervene if the defeated regime breaks any of its terms.

Memos to UN Protest U.S. Air 'Violations'

20 Apr Activity Noted

JN2704202891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1928 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] New York, 27 Apr (INA)—U.S. forces continue their violations of Iraqi territory and insist on harming Iraq's sovereignty.

In a memorandum presented to the UN secretary general today, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations explained that 11 U.S. Chinook aircraft on 20 April landed foreign forces estimated to be an infantry regiment with all its weapons and supported by four helicopters between Iraq's Tall Akbar and Darhawzan.

It said four large vehicles carrying U.S. soldiers entered Iraqi territory from Turkey on the same day, taking the Ibrahim al-Khalil-Zakho highway, and reached the Ibrahim al-Khalil checkpoint.

Iraq's representative reaffirmed these actions constitute a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and open interference in its internal affairs to destabilize internal security. He also urged the UN secretary general to take measures in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UN Charter to stop these violations.

In a second memorandom addressed to the UN secretary general today, Iraq's permanent representative noted the continued U.S. violations of Iraqi airspace, adding that these aircraft on 24-25 April performed 63 sorties with 32 formations at an altitude of 3-7 km and at speeds of 800-1,000 km per hour.

The memorandum also referred to the U.S.-Saudi air activity on 25-26 April, which totaled 111 sorties by 55 formations in addition on a one single sortie at an altitude of 3-7 km at a speed of 700-900 km per hour.

The memorandum added that F-14 and F-15 planes carried out sorties over Baghdad, al-Kut, al-Suwayrah, Diyala, Ba'qubah, Samarra', al-Habbaniyah, al-Razzazah, and al-Hashimiyah for monitoring and provocative purposes.

26-27 Apr 'Sorties' Protested

JN2804143691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] U.S. and Saudi aircraft have continued to violate Iraqi airspace. A memorandum on this, submitted by Iraq's UN envoy to the UN secretary general, says that U.S.-Saudi air activity 26-27 April totaled 104 sorties composed of 51 two-aircraft formations and two individual sorties.

The memorandum added that the aircraft flew at speeds of 360 to 850 km per hour at an altitude between 4 and 10 km.

The memorandum added that the aircraft were identified as F-14's and F-15's. Their flights were concentrated over the areas of Baghdad, al-Kut, al-Hillah, al-Ramadi, (?al-Surayt), Mosul, and Irbil for reconnaissance and provocation purposes.

Saddam Tours Baghdad Quarters, Meets Citizens

JN2804165791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1027 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn toured the quarters of Baghdad today and watched the citizens' celebrations on his blessed birthday.

The city's sons were delighted with the president's tour and received him with chants and applause. They expressed their confidence in a happy and bright future under the banner of triumphant leader Saddam Husayn.

The president met in one of al-Karkh's areas with the sons of our people there, who congratulated him on his blessed birthday.

Trade Minister Accuses U.S. of Hindering Relief

JN2604145991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1419 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Zakho, 26 Apr (INA)—The Ministry of Trade has met the basic food and [word indistinct] requirements of the Zakho district for May.

Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih told INA the materials have been delivered to the area by [word indistinct] of the ministry over the past three days.

Along with the district officer and secretary of the Zakho branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, advance ministry staff and district personnel have supervised distribution to the citizenry. Several news agency and newspaper correspondents also attended.

The minister emphasized that both the party and revolution leaders were eager to secure the basic food needs of our Kurdish people as part of the plan to make food available to our Iraqi people.

He said that convoys of trucks are still transporting large quantities of food, bread, and infants' milk to the Governorates of al-Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, and Dahuk.

The minister held the United States, Britain, and France responsible for deaths among infants and the elderly by impeding their return to their cities and villages under the pretext of providing them with safe housing, when these countries have failed to deliver on their promises to supply food and infant formula.

The ministry, he added, is making available 1,000 tonnes of foodstuffs daily to [words indistinct] to satisfy the needs of the population of the area, whose monthly requirement under the ration card system is 30,000 tonnes.

UNICEF, Ministry Launch 'Health Campaign'

JN2804101591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0815 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Apr (INA)—The Health Ministry is carrying out a widespread health campaign in Iraq in coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Dr. Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman, director of the vaccination department at the ministry and coordinating member with UNICEF and other health organizations that extend aid to Iraq, has stated that the ministry received 50 tonnes of medical aid from UNICEF and other international organizations that were distributed according to need to health centers in the governorates stricken by the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression and the sabotage and destruction of the criminal agents.

He noted that the ministry, in coordination with UNICEF, had resumed administering oral medication to treat diarrhea in children, and had provided subsidiary health centers with the necessary medicine, in addition to continuing vaccination programs in Baghdad and the governorates where child-care centers had been provided with coolers and refrigerators to preserve the vaccines.

Government Said Ready To Resume Oil Exports

NC2904081691 Paris AFP in English 0728 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Nicosia, April 29 (AFP)—Iraq is informing its usual customers that it is ready to resume exports of crude oil and petroleum products as soon as the U.N. embargo is lifted, the MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY reported here Monday.

About 600,000 barrels of oil could be channeled daily through Iraq's northern pipeline system via Turkey, which has escaped serious damage from both the allied air bombardments and Kurdish uprising, the Cyprus-based weekly said.

Production capacity at Iraq's northern oil fields—Karkuk, Bay Hasan and Jambur—is estimated at around 800,000 barrels a day, but 200,000 barrels daily are needed for local refining, it said.

Iraq has about 30 million barrels stored in the pipeline systems and tanks in Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Aden.

But production and exports from Iraq's southern fields in the al-Basrah area cannot be resumed immediately because of damage to the installations, it said.

Current production from the northern fields is estimated at more than 200,000 barrels per day.

Fuel oil, which was previously used in the now-destroyed power stations, will be trucked to "al-'Aqabah, Jordan, for export, as happened with surplus fuel oil during the Iraq-Iran war," it said.

After having complied with all the U.N. resolutions, and accepted the final cease-fire conditions, Iraq has repeatedly called on the United Nations to lift the economic embargo imposed after its August invasion of Kuwait.

The U.N. sanctions committee is due to meet Tuesday to decided whether Iraq can export 942.5 million dollars worth of oil for emergency needs.

Any additional exports will depend on Iraq's implementation of U.N. resolution 687, whose main objective is the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, the weekly noted.

Iraq informed its customers through its State Oil Marketing Organization (SOMO).

Saddam Tasks Minister To Restore Phone Service

JN2604114091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1034 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has tasked Defense Minister Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan with leading a comprehensive drive to repair and improve telephone service in all parts of Iraq.

The campaign is aimed at extending all efforts and capabilities to restore telephone services to the citizens, companies, state departments, and all subscribers to the level that existed before the 30-state aggression.

In their aggression, the U.S.-led allies concentrated on destroying all telecommunications in Iraq.

Minister Bans Seizure of Vehicles for Military

JN2604144791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1412 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] INA has learned that Defense Minister Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan has issued an order prohibiting the seizure of vehicles belonging to the private sector for use in the efforts of the Defense Ministry and the Armed Forces.

The order issued by the defense minister to his ministry's agencies states: If the need arises in future for vehicles belonging to the private sector to join in the efforts of the Armed Forces or Defense Ministry agencies, they should be used only after a fee is agreed upon with the owners of these vehicles.

King Husayn Hopes for 'Reconciliation' Success

JN2804165991 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn today sent a cable of congratulations to His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic of Iraq, on his 55th birthday. Following is the text:

Your Excellency brother President Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic of Iraq, may God protect him—Baghdad. In my name, and on behalf of the Government and people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I send you the most sincere greetings and the warmest congratulations on your 55th birthday.

It pleases me to seize this auspicious opportunity, God willing, to express my best wishes for the success of your good efforts to achieve broad national reconciliation among the various categories of the Iraqi people in general and your serious efforts to restore cohesion between the Arab and Kurdish peoples in particular, in accordance with the agreed upon rules and bases. This would guarantee the unity and firmness of the national Iraqi fabric, allow Iraq to recover and restore its strength, and, consequently, help Iraq's reconstruction efforts and its endeavor to reinforce the foundations of security and stability.

I beseech God that the occasion will come again with you enjoying good health and happiness and your fraternal people enjoying well being and prosperity, after having overcome their plight and resumed their national march toward progress and prosperity. Peace be upon you.

[Signed] Your brother Husayn Bin-Talal

Newspapers Hail Saddam's 55th Birthday

JN2804093991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0712 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 28 Apr (INA)—Newspapers published here today hail the birthday of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, engineer of the glory of contemporary Iraq. The papers devoted their editorials, banner headlines, commentaries, and press interviews to this occasion that is cherished by Iraqis and Arabs. They also published articles and analyses of the character of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, of his historic and unique leadership traits, and of his struggle in Iraq's glorious march. [passage omitted]

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: Since the Iraqi people began celebrating the birthday of Saddam Husayn, their leader and symbol, his birthday has turned into a national occasion. Furthermore, this celebration emerges as a glorious defense, a unique edifice, and a survival that is permeated with defiance and a will to construct. [passage omitted]

The paper stresses that fairness and truth show that leader Saddam Husayn has been instrumental in all construction and jihad endeavors and wherever there was challenge and danger. The paper adds: This is the basic factor that made the people take pride in their leader, who has given leadership new Arab and international dimensions marked by honor, straightforwardness, chivalry, sacrifices, and leadership traits. He has contributed intellectually, politically, and militarily.

The paper adds: This is what made the petty rulers, whose shallowness has been revealed, harbor enmity and hatred toward Iraq. This has run in contrast with the lofty heights to which Saddam Husayn has risen. That is why the petty people stood in the trenches of the anti-Iraq aggression. When the alliance of aggression and evil focuses its campaigns on the person of the leader, utilizes all its media weight, and wages a ferocious psychological war to undermine his standing and status, this shows that the enemies are targeting Iraq's basic source of strength and its major asset.

The paper notes that the fact that Bush and Shamir and their ilk agreed that their aggression will not have achieved its objectives as long as Saddam maintains a presence in his people's hearts shows that the historic rallying around the leader is sound. It also shows that the status the Iraqi people reserved for their leader is historically sound and in keeping with the human sense of fairness.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: "When the Iraqis elevate their leader Saddam Husayn as a banner, a sword, and a symbol of survival, construction, honor, and pride, they deal a blow to all evil capitals, symbols, and agents."

AL-JUMHURIYAH says in today's editorial: The Iraqis did not want Saddam Husayn to celebrate his birthday with his family members. They wanted his birthday to be an Iraqi national and pan-Arab day. They honestly feel that he deserves this, because he is close to them. He knows exactly what gladdens and worries them. He is very close to them and to their hearts.

The paper affirms that the birthday of leader Saddam Husayn is the most beautiful occasion in which the meanings of love, faith, and pride are embodied. [passage omitted]

In today's editorial, AL-QADISIYAH says: President Saddam Husayn was able to overcome the stage of dispair by tackling the nation's objectives responsibly, and to establish for it a clear-cut presence at the level of the required role. The facts about this role were clear to all through Iraq's development in the various fields and levels.

The paper notes that the great conspiracy faced by our Arab nation and struggling country in the past period is one of the facts that stresses imperialism's insistence to halt President Saddam Husayn's march around which the Iraqis and Arabs rallied.

The paper stresses that what occured during the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression and the other chapters of the conspiracy that followed to complete its episodes, foremost being the sedition kindled by the agents who infiltrated the borders, underscores the extent of hatred that pushed them to stand in the face of the Iraqi progress.

The paper adds that what was targeted by the chapters of the conspiracy against Iraq entrenches the soundness of the approach Iraq chose for itself and for the entire nation. It stresses that President Saddam Husayn expressed the nation's will and ambitions. This was consolidated by the vivid examples of the nation's ability to confront, remain steadfast, and thwart the objectives of the conspiracy.

Concluding its editorial, the paper asserts that as we recall the value of the leader, who has become the symbol of the nation's renaissance, we stress that President Saddam Husayn continues to express the nation's ambitions and hopes for renaissance and for attaining its objectives to guarantee a bright future.

'Study' Affirms Need for Saddam's Leadership

JN2804125191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1010 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Apr (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH, organ of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, affirms that the enemies' focus on leader President Saddam Husayn aims first and foremost to fragment Iraq, to squander its resources, divide its people, return them to the era of starvation, illiteracy, and backwardness, and to plunder their great accomplishments.

In a study published today, the paper says the Iraqis' dignity, their sons' future, their country's territorial integrity, its progress, as well as the destiny of the entire Arab nation, are all contingent on maintaining and continuing the leadership of President Saddam Husayn.

The paper adds: The years of war with Iran have proven the soundness of this conclusion, because Saddam Husayn and no one else safeguarded Iraq's territorial integrity and the unity of its people. Besides, he is the one who effected a qualitative leap in Iraq, bringing it out of the era of backwardness and parasitic existence on the products of advanced states to the era of military industrialization, scientific progress, and national unity.

The study notes that the United States, the Zionists, and Britain cannot tolerate the emergence of an Arab leader with exceptional characteristics that gain him the admiration, support, and confidence of his people and the rest of the Arabs through his positive experiment founded on science and technology, developing national capabilities, and reviving self-confidence and confidence in Arab genius, in addition to his insistence on Arab unity and solidarity and the liberation of the occupied Arab territories.

The paper recalls that these allied forces destroyed the Nasirite experiment and assassinated its leader, Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, may God have mercy upon him. These same forces tried to destroy leader Saddam Husayn's experiment. These forces are the United States, Britain, Israel, Iran under the shah, and some Arab oil shaykhs.

The study notes that the following question was raised, a question which undermines the logic of Tehran's rulers: If Tehran's rulers are really hostile toward the United States and Zionism, would it not be logical for their real hostility and spearheads to be directed against the U.S. supporters and interests in the region, rather than against Iraq and its leader, who carried out an experiment to which the United States and Zionism were hostile?

The study comments: This question reflects the obvious paradox between brilliant slogans and suspicious practices, and stresses that hostility toward Iraq and targeting its leader can only be a product of Washington, London, and Tel Aviv. Whoever adopts such an approach objectively and actively serves these capitals.

The study adds: Tehran's hostility toward Iraq and its leader is in reality and practice a result of U.S.-Iranian-Zionist coordination. Irangate has become a clear guide to the fact that the first Gulf war was launched by Iran at the encouragement and support of Washington, London, and Tel Aviv to serve their interests.

The study points out that contrary to the U.S. and Zionist intentions for Iraq to emerge from the first Gulf war dismembered or subdued, Iraq emerged as a great giant capable not only in the military field, but also in creating an advanced industrial base run by hundreds of Iraqi scientists and engineers.

The study concludes that Iraq had reached a deterrent strategic balance with the Zionist entity through its immense military capabilities in general, which for the first time in the history of the region placed the citizens of the Zionist entity at the heart of the war. Thus Iraq confounded the first and most important pillar of Western policy in the Middle East; namely, guaranteeing Israel's full military superiority over all the Arab military forces.

The study adds: Iraq's success in this regard broke the rule laid down by the great powers which stipulates that despite the weapons and technology any country receives, it would remain within the lines drawn by these powers. No country, consequently, is allowed to violate these lines or limits, because the great powers would no longer control their centers of influence and the world would slip out of their hands.

The study maintains that when one considers the fact these developments were coupled with a strongly independent Iraqi national line and Iraq's categorical rejection of subservience or polarization, one realizes the efforts to strengthen Iraq's independent line brought the country into a collision course with the United States and its efforts to eliminate any form of independence from the world, whether that independence is pursued by large or small nations.

The paper adds: Iraq perfected its balanced policy by creating objective foundations for establishing inter-Arab ties based on eagerness to exploit Arab assets for

the Arab people and to enable the Arabs to play a role befitting their standing and resources in the new world.

The paper goes on to say: A review of Iraq's policies from 1988-1990 shows the emergence of a new spirit in inter-Arab ties, a spirit marked by realism, mutual recognition of different systems, and a diminution of doubts and isolation. This shows the importance of the rational policy pursued by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, a policy that most Arab governments found to be reliable.

The study says: The spirit of solidarity demonstrated by Iraq drastically conflicts with the U.S.-British-Zionist approach, which is based on a desire to fragment the Arabs further and to prevent the development of their solidarity. Therefore, anyone can see the components of the U.S.-Zionist decision to destroy Iraq and eliminate its role and to make this contingent on a precondition; namely, getting rid of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn. The Americans and Zionists are doing this because it would have been impossible to bring about these changes, which were unacceptable to the Americans, had it not been for the strategic genius of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and for his building of a powerful and independent Iraq.

The study states that Iraq's present strength and power are attributable to the unity of the leadership, which was made possible by the personal traits of leader Saddam Husayn. Saddam is the genius who ensured the uniformity of Iraq's thinking, the soundness of its plans, and the genius of its options during the historic moments of change, the paper adds.

The paper concludes its study by saying that the enemies' understanding of the role played by the leader president in his capacity as the prime guarantee for the maintenance of a strong, impregnable, and powerful Iraq is what prompted them to focus on getting rid of him, thinking that would be a decisive step and a badly needed one in fragmenting, weakening, and humiliating Iraq.

The paper stresses that the Iraqi people's response to George Bush has been uniform and strong, reaffirming that the prime and inevitable condition for surmounting ordeals and difficulties, for preserving Iraq's unity and independence, for achieving stability and tranquillity, and for realizing the people's satisfaction and democracy lies in maintaining allegiance to the leadership of President Saddam Husayn and continuing to walk in his footsteps during the time of challenge and reconstruction.

Editorial Says Democracy To Take 'New Path'

JN2704074991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0620 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Apr (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH affirms that democratic practices in Iraq will take a new path that will deepen the first steps Iraq witnessed in the past and clear the way for the political parties to express themselves through their programs and independent press. In today's editorial, the paper says that work is proceeding in full swing today to deepen the national dialogue and find a sound basis for understanding among the sons of the one homeland.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says: Democracy is not a slogan we raise to boast about; democracy is required as a means to reach sublime objectives.

The paper adds: The past years of Iraq's experiment did not witness a radical change in deepening the democratic practices as required, not because of the absence of the realization of the importance of this issue, but because circumstances beyond our control prevented the emergence of the ambitious programs that were expected to emerge at a later stage.

Concluding, AL-JUMHURIYAH stresses that the earnest tendency of the democratic course will enrich and diversify Iraq's experiment and will help to consolidate this experiment and move it to advanced stages. The paper says: This is what we hope will be accomplished in the present stage.

Paper Calls U.S. Presence 'Illegitimate'

JN2904074191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0650 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Apr (INA)—AL-THAWRAH has called on UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to find a swift solution to end the illegitimate U.S. presence in the northern part of Iraq. In an article today, the newspaper says that the statements made by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on the international community's intention to take responsibility for the Kurdish refugees in the coming days shows a clear response to the call made by Iraq on adherence to the 18 April agreement.

The paper notes the failure of the U.S. forces in Iraq, in Dhi Qar Governorate, to peddle the scheme of fragmentation and to support the riffraff and terrorists who destroyed everything in the southern governorates in order to achieve their cunning objectives to fragment Iraq—its territory and people.

The paper says: These forces moved—under the pretext of the alleged defense of the sons of our Kurdish people—to the northern area, in a precedent the likes of which never existed in the history of relations among countries, particularly since their illegitimate military presence came after Iraq and the allied forces endorsed the cease-fire resolutions. The objective of these forces is to achieve what they failed to accomplish during their presence in southern Iraq.

The newspaper ridiculed the pretexts the U.S. Administration used to justify its military forces' violation of Iraq's sovereignty—a member state of the international organization. The paper affirmed that such a stand, in

practical terms, meant nothing more than imposing their guardianship on the sons of the Kurdish people without a right to do so, insisting on canceling the international organization's role in establishing peace and stability in the region, and creating a state of chaos and absence of security as a trump card to practice greater political pressure on Iraq.

The newspaper stressed that Iraq, which has always dealt with the Kurdish cause on firm and principled stands far removed from the market of cheap political bargains, has pulled the rug out from under the U.S. forces by signing the 18 April agreement with the representatives of the Kurdish (?front).

Concluding its article, the newspaper expressed the hope that the UN secretary general will find a speedy solution for the withdrawal of the U.S. forces in the region and their replacement by official UN troops. They should also leave the decision up to the united Iraqi people, Arabs and Kurds, to determine their own fate, set the appropriate methods to compensate the losses resulting from the 30- nation alliance against Iraq, and restore the brightness of this pure homeland.

Muslim Mission Reports on Southern Fighting

LD2704151191 Tehran IRNA in English 1415 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] London, April 27, IRNA—A Muslim fact-finding mission to Iraq has returned to London and confirmed the news of the continued uprising in Arab populated southern Iraq against Saddam Husayn's unpopular Ba'thist regime.

According to its spokesman, Mohammad Asadi, regular raids were going on against the Republican Guards at night in all the major towns of the south, including the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbala', whose sanctity was so brutally desecrated by Ba'thist troops last March.

Asadi, speaking to a group of Muslims in North London, Friday evening, described the horrible situation of people in southern Iraq which he visited over the last three weeks.

He gave an example of the terrorism of the ruling regime by saying that Ba'thist forces arrested all the members of 22 families including children and the elderly, in the remote village of Talha in al-Basrah Province, because members of the family took part in the popular uprising against the regime.

In Iraq, the arrested never return, and are usually tortured to death in the most grisly manner no matter what their age.

Asadi also said that there were now epidemics of typhoid and cholera in southern Iraq, due to a lack of sanitation and clean water.

He said the Government of Iraq is not interested to help the people of the south because the Baghdad regime regards the Shi'as who form the majority of the Iraqi population, as its enemies.

Saddam Husayn's Republican Guards who last March slaughtered an estimated half a million Iraqi Arabs, are viewed in southern Iraq as an occupation force.

With the world's attention focussed on the Kurdish north, the tragedy of southern Iraq is far more frightening, and according to confirmed reports over 800,000 Shi'a arabs have fled to the vast marshlands of southern Iraq to escape the regime's bloodbaths.

Their plight was deliberately ignored by the West, but as some segments of the Western media are slowly beginning to admit, the uprising in southern Iraq "against Saddam Husayn was far greater and cost more lives than the Kurdish one against him."

What Saddam's godless forces did to the holy shrine of the prophet's (PBUH) [peace be upon him] cousin and son-in-law Imam 'Ali Ibn-Abi Talib (PBUH) at al-Najaf, and that of the prophet's (PBUH) grandson Imam Husayn (PBUH) at Karbala', has few parallels in the history of desecration of religious sanctity.

The clippings of the badly damaged shrines of the prophet's (PBUH) household, which were shown on BBC television last night, has stunned many Muslim viewers whatever their sectarian denomination.

The spokesman of the fact-finding mission, who also visited the Iraqi refugee camps in Iran, said the situation in the camps needs urgent attention.

More than one million Iraqis have sought refuge in Iran to escape the century's worst human tragedy in Iraq, unleashed by Saddam Husayn following his ignominous defeat in the Persian Gulf war.

Republican Guards Continue 'Brutalities' in South

LD2604183191 Tehran IRNA in English 1730 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Dasht-e Azadegan (Khuzestan), April 26, IRNA—With the stepping up of the popular uprising against the "detested Ba'thist regime" in southern Iraq, Saddam Husayn has intensified his brutalities against the Iraqi Arabs, report the fresh group of refugees here Friday.

Jasim Hasan who entered Iran today said, "clashes between people and the Saddamites (pro-government forces) now cover several towns including al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, al-Tannumah, Qila' Salih, al-Qurnah, Kahlah, Abu-al-Khasib, Majar, al-Samawah, and al-Nasiriyah, with daily reports of a few Ba'thists killed and some armoured carriers destroyed."

He said the morale among the Iraqi revolutionaries was high, despite the routine rounding up of civilians and

their torture and execution at the hands of the Republican Guards, who are viewed in southern Iraq as a foreign occupation force.

Kazim Husayn, 71, a resident of Majar told IRNA that "more than 3,000 Iraqis from al-'Amarah have fled into the adjoining marshes to escape Saddam Husayn's bloodbath."

There are women and children among them, and they are in "urgent need of food and medicines," he said.

The Iraqi refugee also disclosed that last week in al-'Amarah, the Ba'thist troops dragged away from homes some 300 civilians, and after tying their hands and feet pushed them into the river.

"The criminals, the cowards," said the septuagenarian with his voice breaking in emotion, " they exulted in wild cries at the sight of drowning women and babes."

Another Iraqi refugee complained that "our plight is worsening by the day. No one seems to be bothered about the fate of the hundreds of thousands who have gone into the marshes."

He was referring to the 800,000-odd Iraqi Arabs who have taken to the vast marshes of southern Iraq to save themselves from mounting torture and repression.

Last March, Saddam Husayn slaughtered an estimated half a million Iraqi Arabs and desecrated the holy cities of Karbala' and al-Najaf, following his ignominous defeat at the hands of the American-led coalition in the Persian Gulf war.

A million-plus Iraqis—mostly Kurds—have streamed into Iran to escape the blood-curdling atrocities of the Ba'thists.

Rebel Radio Rounds Up Recent Battles

NC2704174091 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1420 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Our valiant revolutionaries succeeded in foiling a desparate attempt by the regime's forces to capture our positions in the al-Basrah area following heroic battles with the regime's forces in the area. Our correspondent says Saddam's forces suffered heavy losses in men and materiel and failed to advance toward our revolutionaries' positions.

The lines in al-Madinah, al-Qurnah, (al-Sharis) witnessed various attacks by our heroic revolutionaries. In al-Madinah, our revolutionaries attacked a military post of the so-called mercenaries Mojahedin-e Khalq, a terrorist organization whose fighters have escaped the justice of Islam in Iran and collaborated with the discredited Saddamist regime. A number of Mojahedin-e Khalq were arrested, tried, and executed for assisting the regime in its crimes against our people. Two military trucks were burned in a quick operation by our revolutionaries in the same area.

On the al-Qurnah-(al-Sharis) line, the fighters of the popular revolution waged a lightening attack on one of the enemy's military targets. Our fighters succeeded in taking quick, complete control of the target, killed 20 troops, and forced the rest to flee.

A day later, our revolutionaries surprised the enemy forces, who were apparently preparing to attack our positions, with intensive shelling of their positions and assembly points. Fire broke out in many of the enemy's positions.

In expression of their sacred revolutionary defiance and their steadfastness in the face of the rickety regime, our valiant revolutionaries in the holy city of Karbala' are continuing to wage their daring attacks against Saddam's forces despite the brutal massacres perpetrated by Saddam's forces there. According to our correspondents, the regime is regularly combing the area in order to keep the situation under control. The regime has also ordered its mercenaries to dress in civilian clothes to escape the punishment of the revolutionaries. The regime's forces are maintaining their state of alert, particularly at night.

Our correspondents report that the streets of Karbala' are almost empty. The only pedestrians are women who occasionally go out briefly in the morning to look for food in the deserted marketplace.

While the regime is trying to hold on desparately to power, and as the economic and living conditions continue to deteriorate, elements of anger and public discontent continue to mount and threaten another wide-scale eruption of the situation. Reports indicate that discontent is even more pronounced among the military, who have begun sending written and oral messages to our revolutionaries asking to join their ranks.

On the popular level, and despite all the regime's threats to punish all those who have guns, our fighters are holding on to their guns and using them against the regime's mercenaries.

'Mass Desertion' by Soldiers in South Reported

LD2704180991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] A number of Iraqi refugees who have crossed the Dasht-e-Azadegan border and entered Iran confirmed reports about the presence of thousands of men, women, children and elderly—all inhabitants of southern Iraqi cities—in canefields and marshes in southern Iraq. They said that the people have taken shelter in those areas in fear of mass arrests and killings by mercenaries of the Iraqi regime.

According to a Central News Unit report from Ahvaz, those sources say that in the last few days, 300 people have been arrested, their hands and feet tied, and have been thrown in the river in the town of al-Amarah.

Husayn Fariji, an Iraqi refugee, said:

Clashes continue in southern Iraqi towns. Last week, in an operation in the al-Amarah region, the popular forces destroyed 25 military vehicles and three tanks and killed or injured a number of Ba'thist forces and captured 22 of them.

The refugee added: Mass desertion by soldiers has become more widespread. Dozens of soldiers from the 4th and 6th Corps, stationed in southern Iraq, recently deserted their posts.

Opposition 'Totally' Controls Al-Basrah at Night

NC2704161091 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Formerly Voice of Free Iraq]

[Text] Clashes continued between the Iraqi uprising forces and the forces of the despot regime in the south last night. During clashes near al-Basrah, the tyrant regime's forces used helicopters and heavy-caliber weapons, including tanks and artillery. The Saddamist aircraft dropped flares over the scene of clashes to locate the uprising forces.

The popular uprising masses in the south managed to gain control of al-Basrah on Friday night. A large number of the regime's forces took to their heels as a result of the lightning attack launched by the uprising forces on al-Basrah. The uprising forces totally control al-Basrah at night, at which time the regime's tools are completely useless. Moreover, the uprising masses have attacked the government centers in al-'Amarah which are being used as camps by the tyrant regime.

Tehran Reports 'Heavy Clashes' in Al-Basrah

LD2804202691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Southern Iraq continues to be the scene of heavy clashes between Muslim revolutionaries and forces loyal to Saddam Husayn. Opponents of the Iraqi regime announced that the popular forces have frustrated the Ba'thist regime's efforts to capture their positions in al-Basrah.

According to IRNA, heavy casualties were inflicted on Ba'thist forces during the clashes. The report says severe clashes were also going on in all areas of the city of al-Basrah. During these clashes several government soldiers were arrested and two armored personnel carriers were set ablaze. The report also says that the popular forces attacked two intelligence posts of the Iraqi regime in al-Amarah and Karbala', killing several government soldiers.

Rebel Radio Details 'Heroic' Al-'Amarah Attack

NC2804210291 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1920 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In continuation of the heroic operations our courageous revolutionaries have been launching against the mercenaries of Saddam's regime, groups of the popular revolution forces in the al-Musharrah area in al-'Amarah district launched a lightning attack against the positions held by the 704th brigade of the 18th division on Sunday, 28 April. The revolutionaries launched a three-pronged attack on the brigade's positions, inflicting very heavy losses on personnel and equipment. The results were as follows:

A large number of Saddam's mercenaries were killed or wounded and four others were captured. In addition, six 120-mm mortars and quantities of light-caliber weapons and ammunition were seized.

The revolutionaries killed a large group and captured eight others who sold their honor to Saddam. They also seized one 82-mm mortar and a large number of light-caliber weapons.

The heroes of the popular revolution destroyed an armored personnel carrier and killed many of Saddam's men, including a first lieutenant. They also seized a large quantity of light- and medium-caliber weapons, and other equipment including binoculars and communications equipment.

Saddam's Son-in-Law Said Killed in Bomb Blast

NC2604155891 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Formerly Voice of Free Iraq]

[Text] A powerful explosion rocked an intelligence service center near the al-Yarmuk quarter in Baghdad. Reports have leaked out that Saddam Kamil, son-in-law of despot Saddam Husayn, and nine intelligence officers were killed. Abu-Thil, who ran an intelligence cell for Sadddam Husayn in Britain, was wounded.

Saddam Kamil was in charge of the center where the explosion took place.

Saddam's Son Noted as BABIL Chief Editor

NC2604134491 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1300 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Formerly Voice of Free Iraq]

[Excerpt] The regime of defeated despot Saddam Husayn continues its deception and attempts to cover up the crimes Saddam has committed against Iraq through his mad adventures.

The newspaper BABIL, whose chief editor is 'Uday, son of the defeated despot, says that a decision will be announced soon to cancel the arms industry in Iraq.

'Uday's newspaper said yesterday that rumors and whispers are circulating in his father's regime that the arms industry will be stopped and that this has been agreed upon officially. The newspaper gave no further details. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Reaction to Baker Visit, Talks

Ne'eman Criticizes Agreements

TA2604152991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Minister Yuval Ne'eman, the leader of Tehiya, says the agreements reportedly reached by Levi and Baker might lead to the breakup of the government. Ne'eman said he would have expected such agreements from an Alignment-led government. Perhaps the chairman of the Labor Party, rather than the Likud, should be allowed to implement the plan, he said.

Ne'eman told our political correspondent Arye Golan that he would raise the issue and would demand an urgent debate in the next Cabinet session.

Levi's Aide Explains Conference Idea

TA2604173091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Uri Oren, the foreign minister's adviser, says that a regional conference cannot be compared to an international conference and that there is no resemblance between the two. According to him, an international conference can be summoned by the UN secretary general on behalf of the Security Council. Such a conference grants itself full rights to discuss, decide, and even to enforce resolutions. On the other hand, in a conference such as the one proposed by Israel, all the sides—including the sponsoring countries—would agree in advance that the conference would have no powers, would hold no deliberations, would pass no decisions, and would not be an appelate body. The deliberations would be directly between Israel and the Arab countries, and between Israel and the Palestinians. Thus, all the dangers would be neutralized.

In Oren's opinion, the idea of convening a regional conference in which Israel would have full control over the developments is one of the greatest achievements in the political contacts.

In the meeting with Secretary Baker this morning, Minister Levi said that Israel would sympathetically consider a semiannual summoning of the regional conference—which would have no powers and would not intervene in the deliberations—just to be updated on the direct negotiations.

Likud officials have voiced their misgivings about this agreement. One of them, Defense Minister Moshe Arens, expressed his apprehension that agreement to summon the regional conference periodically would turn it into an international conference.

Arens Views Talks, Conference

TA2704080291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0705 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by political correspondent Arye Golan on 26 April—recorded]

[Text] [Golan] Mr. Defense Minister, a good Sabbath to you.

[Arens] And a good Sabbath to you.

[Golan] The talks with Secretary of State Baker were suddenly cut off because of his mother's death. The question, naturally, is at what stage were the talks severed? Have agreements been reached and positive answers given already, as Foreign Minister Levi's office reported, even though, in fact, nothing could have been concluded without Prime Minister Shamir and indeed, nothing was concluded, because in the middle of the conversation with Shamir, Baker dropped everything and went home?

[Arens] The prime minister did not have the opportunity to end the conversation, and that is why he did not conclude it. I also did not manage to meet the secretary of state. He called me to apologize, saying that he has to go home, and I expressed my condolences over the death of his mother. So, I would say that I believe that, at present, things are not yet concluded. For our part, the problem would seem to be the tendency of elements in the Arab world to press Mr. Baker into trying to lead to an international conference.

[Golan] Do you really fear that, as senior Likud members have said, we are degenerating in the direction of an international conference, if only through the agreement of the foreign minister that the regional conference would reconvene every six months to be updated?

[Arens] Look, it started as a one-time event with the participation of the United States and the USSR. Today, they want to change the name from meeting to conference. They want to add European representatives to this conference, they want to add a UN observer to it, and they want our agreement so that the meeting could reconvene, thus it would no longer be a one-time event. I believe that the gap between what is being offered here and the international conference, which we will not attend, is getting smaller.

[Golan] Our partial agreement was, in fact, given this morning when Foreign Minister Levi agreed that the regional meeting will reconvene every six months, not to make decisions, but it would reconvene.

[Arens] I did not attend the meeting with the foreign minister. Still, we must remember that the final agreement is made by the government. Nevertheless, in terms of presenting the Israeli position, eventually it must be concluded with the prime minister, and as you well

know, Shamir's meeting with Baker did not reach its end, therefore it was not concluded.

[Golan] What do you think of the reservation Mr. Levi introduced that the biannual meeting would be subject to Israel's agreement and would be held only to update, not to make decisions or resolutions?

[Arens] I am expressing my personal view here. I believe we should not agree to such a thing. On the face of it, it sounds fine: The conference cannot reconvene without our agreement—I also believe that we should oppose the change in name, from meeting to conference—at the same time, however, it is easy to imagine what could happen: The Arab countries, the United States, and the USSR, certainly a European representative and a UN representative, if they attend, would demand that the conference reconvene, and we would find ourselves in the corner, the only ones who do not want this conference to convene. It is easy to see that our situation would not be at all comfortable. Why should we agree to create such a situation in advance? I wish to add that if the Arab countries know that they have the option to reconvene the conference, all incentives would be lost on them. They would present the most extreme positions. If we do not agree, they would demand that the conference reconvene. That is why, in my opinion, it is not useful in terms of the goal we want to attain—namely, effective negotiations that would yield an agreement between us and the Arabs.

[Golan] Mr. Arens, listening to your remarks I ask myself whether you feel that someone in Jerusalem is running too fast.

[Arens] No, I am not saying that. There is a method, which possibly is not the best method, of meeting with Baker. The Israeli side is holding separate meetings: The prime minister meets him, the foreign minister meets him, I do. I believe it would be better if the Israeli representation—if indeed this is what we are—meets Mr. Baker together.

[Golan] Then there will be no agreements that need the subsequent consent of the prime minister.

[Arens] Then all the problems of coordination, which naturally arise when meetings are held separately, would disappear. The same could have happened to me had I been the first to meet Baker. It is possible that, after my meeting, it would have become apparent that my opinions were not identical to those of the prime minister or the foreign minister.

[Golan] Minister Arens, the contacts have been going on so far while the issue of elections, which was a very central topic in the peace initiative of May 1989, has simply disappeared. I believe you regret this?

[Arens] I regret this. Again, I think in terms of what should be done to bring about direct negotiations, and eventually to increase the probability of attaining an agreement. I must confess that I am not a great believer in appointing representatives. I am not at all certain that agreement on the appointment of representatives can be achieved. I do not believe that appointed representatives, no matter who appoints them, would be authentic; their mandate would thus be defunct and incomplete. There is no doubt in my mind that eventually there will be no way to avoid this hurdle called elections, which is not a hurdle really, but over which we must jump. I mean that the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza will elect their representatives.

[Golan] What will you do if they elect their representatives and you realize that they are PLO and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supporters? Will Israel be able then, after the elections, to announce: We are not ready to negotiate with representatives who were elected in proper democratic elections?

[Arens] We have already announced that we are willing to hold negotiations with whoever is elected. The situation here is no different from negotiations with the Syrian representatives, the Syrian president, the Jordanian representative, or any other country that declares its willingness to hold negotiations with us. It is not at all clear that we would reach an agreement with them. If the Syrians want to negotiate with us, we know exactly what will be on the agenda, what will be first on their agenda. That is why the probability of reaching an understanding with them is not very high. If elections are held and extremists are elected, I would say that the probability of reaching an agreement with them is very low.

[Golan] Will we be ready to talk to them if they are PLO supporters?

[Arens] I wish to stress one point that cannot be overlooked, and in many respects it is the most important of all—the PLO claims it speaks not only for the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza; it claims it is speaking for what they call the Palestinian diaspora; not for 1.5 million, but in the name of 5 million Palestinians. I believe that we must demonstrate that we are not willing to talk to such a body, whether it is elected or appointed. We are willing to sit down and talk with the representatives of the Arab population that lives with us in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. As I have said before, if those elected or appointed hold extreme positions, then we will hold negotiations, but without result.

[Golan] Do you believe that Baker's intensive efforts will yield results, in view of the harsh positions we hear from Damascus, the Saudi refusal to attend at least the opening stage of the political process, and the fact that the Palestinians, when they are met with, declare that they are PLO supporters?

[Arens] Look, I believe that eventually we will see results. We are experienced. We live in the Middle East and know that the peace process in our region is very slow, and we also know the reasons for it. Most of the Arab elements have no incentive to make peace with us, and some of them do not even want to make peace with us. In

fact, we are waiting for changes in the shape and character of the Arab world, for the creation of an atmosphere in which they would want to make peace with us, in which they would have an incentive to do that. We need a lot of patience and perseverance. I believe that eventually we will make progress. Do not forget, it has taken them some 20 to 30 years to reach the negotiating table with us; 30 years and five wars.

[Golan] Yes. As for the long term, the prime minister last week told the Paris newspaper LE MONDE that he will not sell the territories cheap, that he will not give up the territories. But, he said, perhaps those who come after me will. Do you think he was referring to you?

[Arens] I am sure he did not mean me. Look, about this formula of territories for peace, which somehow became popular among Israelis and not just people from the outside, if you think about it for a minute you will find that nowhere in history did this formula serve as a basis for peace. The last person who used this formula was Hitler. He demanded that territory be given to him, claiming that if it were, there would be peace. I cannot think of a single case in which this formula actually worked and helped attain peace. No peace can be built on this in the Middle East. I find it hard to believe that the Arab elements who favor this formula, and who try to force it on Israel, are really interested in peace.

[Golan] But, will there be peace, and not in 30 years and five more wars?

[Arens] When you ask this question, it implies that, if we only wanted to, we could hasten the process and make al-Asad, King Husayn, King Fahd, and perhaps even Saddam make peace with us. You know, however, as every Israeli knows, that, if the process is slow, it is not because of us. It is slow because Syria is led by al-Asad, Saudi Arabia is led by Fahd, and Iraq is still led by Saddam Husayn even after the Gulf war.

[Golan] Minister Arens, thank you very much.

[Arens] Thank you.

Shamir Opposes Continuing Conference

TA2704173091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Israel does not agree to a more than one-time convening of the regional conference. This was conveyed yesterday by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The two men differ over a continuing role for the conference, and our reporter says no agreement was reached between them.

Shamir's position was conveyed yesterday to various members of the government coalition and Likud, including Minister Yuval Ne'eman and Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen. Both of them had expressed concern over reports that Foreign Minister Levi had agreed that the conference could meet every six months, with the Israeli agreement, to receive updates on the direct negotiations. [passage omitted]

The government tomorrow will receive a report on the talks with Baker on Friday, and Prime Minister Shamir is to stress that the two sides did not come to an agreement over the matter of continuity for a peace conference. It will also be noted that talks were cut short by news of the death of Secretary Baker's mother.

Shamir Sees Chance for Direct Talks

TA2804045391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Arye Golan and anchor Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good morning, Mr. Shamir.

[Shamir] Good morning.

[Qital] How would you describe the state of our talks with the United States at the present moment?

[Shamir] I think we are in the midst of the talks. Do not forget that the issue is complex and serious. The conflict between us and the Arab world is nothing new; it has continued for a long time. It takes a great many efforts and goodwill from all sides to resolve it.

If you will permit me, I would like to explain the basis for the last few weeks' endeavors:

[Qital] Please, go ahead.

[Shamir] Well, in fact they are based on a proposal that was raised approximately four years ago, in 1987, by former Secretary of State George Shultz, who raised the suggestion in his talks with me at that time that all the leaders of Israel's neighboring countries and Israel would be summoned to Washington, where the U.S. President and the president of the Soviet Union would address them and ask the parties to start direct negotiations. This would end that meeting, after which the invited countries would engage in direct negotiations. What lay behind this was the demand by the Arab countries for some kind of international seal of approval for the negotiations between Israel and its neighbors. I accepted that approach and was prepared to engage in this move. Shultz was very pleased with our consent but still needed the agreement of the other sides. He left Israel for London where King Husayn happened to be. He may have been the first candidate for direct negotiations with Israel. Shultz suggested it to Husayn, but the latter immediately said no and rejected this proposal. This is how that issue expired.

Since then, of course, several years have elapsed. There have been additional attempts. Now, after the Gulf war, following reports that came primarily from U.S. sources that a certain positive shift has occurred in the Arab

countries' attitude toward Israel, we discussed with the Americans a kind of renewed attempt to reach serious bilateral negotiations. That was when the idea of renewing Shultz's 1987 notion was broached, in the hope that we could progress along that path.

Well, the Americans harnessed themselves to this mission and Secretary of State Baker has been making extraordinary efforts, both physical and intellectual, toward that, and the talks began. There have been some achievements and some agreements, while agreements on some other issues have not yet been reached. The issue is complex, but I think that these negotiations are in their midst. It is necessary to conclude them, and I believe there is a chance that the direct negotiations which Israel has in fact demanded all these years will begin. Of course, there is no telling whether these direct negotiations would succeed and the parties would reach an agreement, but we believe this is the only realistic way to progress that offers hope for a peace agreement.

[Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, you talked about the existing agreements and those that are still lacking.

[Shamir] Yes.

[Golan] On Friday morning [26 April] there was a lot of confusion when, following Foreign Minister David Levi's meeting with the secretary of state, the foreign minister's communique stated that Israel agrees to the reconvocation of that regional conference biannually, at the soonest, following Israel's consent, and only for the purpose of providing updates. The Prime Minister's Office later explained that there is no such agreement. What is the meaning of this?

[Shamir] Look, this is one of the issues; it is not the main issue, it is one of the issues. This is where Israel and the Arab countries attitudes differ: While Israel wants to emphasize direct negotiations, the Arab countries are pulling in the direction of turning this meeting into an international conference for all intents and purposes. We, of course, object to that. One of the issues is the one-time character of the meeting, where we only meet and then adjourn for direct negotiations, versus the Arab demand that this turn into some kind of permanent institution. We oppose that because we maintain that if there are recurrent sessions of that meeting or conference we will never reach direct negotiations. The Arabs normally require an international conference because they are not interested in direct negotiations with us. We insist on direct negotiations, however.

As for the Foreign Ministry communique, it should not be regarded as the conclusion of the negotiations. Usually in such negotiations, where so many issues are involved, the final agreement comes at the conclusion of all the deliberations. There is no point attributing too much importance to agreements reached at every individual meeting.

[Qital] Mr. Prime Minister, you have been talking about differences of opinion with the Arabs. Yet when I follow this morning's reports from the United States, including a NEW YORK TIMES report and electronic media reports, I see that there are also differences of opinion with the United States.

[Shamir] That is true. The United States is first of all interested in the success of this effort. So it would like the parties to agree. It believes that if Israel makes additional concessions, this will increase the chances for Arab concessions in some things. For instance, in this matter of the one-time character of the meeting, there is still no consent from the Arab countries. Syria still firmly insists on its demand that this indeed be an international conference under UN auspices, and the like. Yet Secretary of State Baker, as a mediator who wants his mission to succeed, would like to come to the Arabs and say: Look, Israel has agreed that this would be a continuing conference.

Naturally, there are also differences of opinion with the United States, and they cannot be ignored. There are also other differences of opinion that we have not discussed yet at all, and they are not only procedural matters, there are also substantive matters and the like. The road is long, and this is something that we all agree about—the Americans and us. We are in the middle of the road.

[Golan] We have also heard that the responsibility for the failure of these contacts may be placed on Israel. This, at least, is the gist of the hints that have come from the United States after Baker's return. There has been talk in the United States of a reassessment, recalling the Ford era, and some have talked about shock treatment for Israel.

[Shamir] As a journalist, you no doubt know that the press sometimes expresses moods and views...

[Golan, interrupting] But these are all fed by someone, sir.

[Shamir] Sometimes, but, of course, if people say that, it will not accurately reflect reality, it will not be correct, because Israel has gone pretty far and, as everyone knows, it has all these years adamantly and consistently insisted on the principle of direct negotiations. We cannot budge from this principle.

[Qital] Mr. Shamir, do you know when Baker will return, if at all?

[Shamir] No, I do not. I believe that he will come back, but we have not yet set a date because of the tragic reason for the adjournment. There was no point, before we bid him farewell, of setting the format and date for the next talks, but I presume there will be a follow-up.

[Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, you must have read the weekend papers, which carried a lot of sharp criticism of things you were quoted as having told LE MONDE in an interview with Marek Halter. You said, among other things: I am 76 years old and in five years will probably no longer be at the helm. You added that it would be

legitimate to think that your successor would be able to accept territorial concessions in exchange for peace. The papers took this to mean that you are implying your understanding that it is necessary to cede territories, but that you personally do not wish to do that yourself.

[Shamir] Look, Marek Halter is a well-known journalist and he can sometimes allow himself to indulge in what is known as poetic license. It is true that we held a conversation, during which I told him: Look, my age is a fact of life, I cannot deny it. Presumably when we reach negotiations on the permanent solution I will no longer be able to participate, or will not participate, in the negotiations. I do not know what the position of the man who will replace me would be. I never said, nor could have said, that whoever comes in my place would give up what I am not giving up. What I will not concede is quite clear, but I cannot say anything about the man who will take my place.

[Golan] Even if he comes from Likud ranks?

[Shamir] We did not discuss this. I presume that whoever comes from the Likud ranks will hold positions similar to mine.

[Qital] Mr. Shamir, is it your feeling as the week starts that there is a crisis?

[Shamir] I do not think that we are progressing toward a crisis. Let me tell you the truth, I have far more serious concerns, and my thoughts are devoted primarily to the absorption of immigrants, although, of course, this issue of the negotiations is important. I think that it is too premature to give up on efforts in this direction.

[Golan] You no doubt know, Mr. Prime Minister, that even in that area, too, we require U.S. financial aid, and there have already been indications that this issue will be considered differently in September, pending our consent.

[Qital] There has been talk of linkage.

[Shamir] But things are not secret; it is not the first time we have seen such things. Let us hope we will withstand this and that Israel and its friends will be able to weather this campaign. It is too early to talk about it. We must proceed as best we can, given the circumstances and the reality.

[Qital] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, thank you very much, and good morning.

[Shamir] Thank you.

'Influence' May Be Used Against U.S.

TA2804081191 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 28 Apr 91 pp A1, 2

[Report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef, Ran Dagoni, Shefi Gabay, and Hanan Schlein]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Political circles in Jerusalem have complained about the one-sided leaks from Baker's party, which put the blame on Israel and ignore the fact that the Arab countries have reneged on their readiness to launch peace negotiations with Israel. In view of the threats to pressure Israel and submit it to "a shock treatment," senior sources have said that Israel would not hesitate to use its influence. [passage omitted]

Shamir-Levi Feud on Meeting Debated

TA2804103891 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1005 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem]

[Text] The Cabinet session is still going on as we speak, but it is already clear that the differences of opinion between the prime minister and the defense minister on the one hand, and the foreign minister on the other hand, over the duration of the regional conference were placed on the table with all their attendant ramifications. Interior Minister Rabbi Arye Der'i supported Foreign Minister David Levi's position; whereas Ministers Qatzav, Ne'eman, and Magen supported the position of Shamir and Arens. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 28 April reports that "the foreign minister says that all the positions he presented to Baker had been coordinated with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir."] Minister David Magen said during the Cabinet session that the continuing session is a cup full of poison for Israel. The United States knows that it is impossible to make us drink it in one slurp, which is why it is adopting the tactic of giving it to us spoonful by spoonful. Our desire for peace should not lead to critical mistakes, warned Magen.

Professor Yuval Ne'eman, who remained the sole representative of the right-of-Likud camp in the government, seeing that Sharon, Ze'evi, and Refa'el Eytan were absent, warned that if the Israeli Government goes to an international conference, Tehiya will bolt the government and the coalition. Each stage of so-called agreements, said Ne'eman, leads to another visit by Baker in which he demands more and more concessions from Israel.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir concluded the debate on this issue, expressing objection to a continuing regional conference, as we heard during our conversation with him this morning. Mr. Shamir favors a one-time opening meeting which will immediately turn into direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries and between Israel and the Palestinians. This is the position of the prime minister and the defense minister. Their differences of opinion with Foreign Minister Levi will no doubt reverberate both in the Cabinet and inside the Likud.

Levi Criticized for Premature Statement

TA2804112291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 28 apr 91

[Text] The Cabinet session ended a short while ago. Our political correspondent Arye Golan says there are no real differences of opinion between Prime Minister Shamir and Defense Minister Arens on the one hand and Foreign Minister Levi on the other.

According to the ministers who left the meeting, apparently the criticism leveled at the foreign minister was solely on his having come out of the meeting with Baker on Friday [26 April] with agreements which, according to preliminary Cabinet sessions, were supposed to be made only at the final stage of contacts with the U.S. secretary of state.

As for the continuing regional conference, Minister Ehud Olmert said that the implication from remarks made even by Minister Levi is that at issue is not a continuing conference, but a meeting of the participants of the opening meeting to hear progress reports on the direct contacts between the sides.

Levi: Israel Not To Blame for Failure

TA2804132791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister David Levi has said that he did not present to Baker a single thing that was not agreed to by the prime minister and coordinated with him in advance. Those who get cold feet will not be able to add anything to the many achievements Israel has obtained in its talks with the United States, Levi said, and he stressed: There is no international conference; only a novice on political and policy-making issues could say there is. We are talking about a framework with no powers or influence that would be convened only to be briefed about progress in the negotiations.

Minister Levi added that whoever believes that nothing will happen if we stand idly by had better beware of decisions made behind Israel's back. The foreign minister made these remarks to our political correspondent Arye Golan at the end of the Cabinet meeting. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1130 GMT on 28 April carries a similar report by political correspondent Natan Gutman adding: "Levi said that those who attempt to say that the Levi-Baker agreements have not been accepted are nitpickers. The foreign minister believes that if the political initiative should fail, Israel will not be blamed for it.

["In the Cabinet session today, Prime Minister Shamir reiterated his firm opposition to the idea of the ongoing conference and said that this issue and the question of the UN participation are the central difficulties between Israel's position and that of the United States."

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 28 April adds: "Speaking in the Cabinet session, the prime minister said there will be no ongoing conference or ongoing meeting. At the prime minister's bureau, our political correspondent Arye Golan was told that that is the government's stand. Furthermore, the government does not agree to the continuation of the regional conference beyond the one-time opening event."]

Likud Faction Supports Shamir Position

TA2904102491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] The leadership of the Likud Knesset faction has expressed support for Prime Minister Shamir's position ruling out a continuing peace conference. The Likud faction leadership stressed that the Likud is in favor of direct negotiations with the Arab countries.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen points out that this position implies indirect criticism of Foreign Minister David Levi. Knesset member Sara Doron, chairwoman of the Likud faction, asked Prime Minister Shamir to dedicate his meeting with the faction to a discussion of the political process.

Cabinet Looks Toward Next Talks

TA2904103291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Apr 91 pp A1, 8

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar and Ori Nir]

[Excerpts] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will renew his Middle East mediation efforts in the next few days. At yesterday's Cabinet session, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir confirmed that he had given his consent to the understandings reached between Baker and Foreign Minister Levi on Friday and that they would be the basis for future talks with the United States. At the same time, Levi himself explained yesterday that he objects to an ongoing conference or the inclusion of an observer on behalf of the UN secretary general—two elementary conditions without which Baker cannot envision a way of bridging the gap between Israel and the Arab countries led by Syria.

Political circles in Jerusalem said yesterday that Baker's briefings of the U.S. press in which the phrase "shock treatment" was heard, were a tactical move aimed at softening Israel's stand. They pointed out that Ambassador William Brown quickly explained to the Foreign Ministry's Eytan Bentzur, who is in charge of North American affairs, that Baker plans to promote the process and expects all the parties to engage in the efforts.

Brown's remarks were apparently meant to refute reports in the United States about a "reassessment" of Washington's relations with Jerusalem, along the lines of the move taken in 1975 by then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and to give Israel another—probably final—opportunity to respond favorably to the questions Baker had presented to it regarding the ongoing nature of the

conference for the purpose of receiving progress reports, and the inclusion of the United Nations and East Jerusalem representatives in the Palestinian delegation.

Shamir complained yesterday to his associates that Levi had rushed to accept the demand that the conference be updated every six months on the progress made in the direct talks between the sides. Shamir claimed that in consultations held beforehand between himself, Levi, and Defense Minister Moshe Arens, it was decided that an agreement on the matter with the United States would be preceded by a request that Baker furnish a written document in which the terms he had reached during his talks with the Arab leaders would be summarized.

In the clarification meeting held yesterday between Shamir and Levi, it was agreed that in the next meeting, Israel would ask Baker for a clarification from the United States that the periodic updating of the conference would not turn the opening event into a permanent forum. Shamir attributes great importance to the semantics because several members of the Cabinet insist that Israel should not participate in an ongoing conference. That is why the prime minister's bureau yesterday announced that Shamir wishes to explain that Israel objects to the continuity of the opening meeting and that this represents the cabinet's stand.

The prime minister also claimed that he had agreed with Levi and Arens that before Israel consents to the inclusion of Europe in the meeting, an understanding would be reached with the EC leaders regarding the price that body would pay for its participation. It seems that in a meeting with the Netherlands prime minister in London not long ago, Shamir said: "We will not leave Europe out of the process." Levi reported to the ministers that the European countries are prepared to participate in the meeting with the status of "participants," which is "lower than the status of those under whose auspices the meeting would be held, but higher than that of observers," and that the matter would be examined with the 12 European foreign ministers he is scheduled to meet in Brussels in two weeks.

In a meeting yesterday with a Jewish delegation from Montreal, Shamir said that this would be a one-time meeting that would take place either in Washington or the Middle East, in which Presidents Bush and Gorbachev would ask the leaders of the region to launch the process of direct talks. Shamir insists that the international forum would disperse immediately thereafter and that it would not reconvene, unless for the purpose of endorsing agreements that would be reached between the parties in direct talks. [passage omitted]

During the Cabinet session, Shamir explained that he himself had given Baker his consent for the participation of Israel, together with the Arab countries, also in an international conference to deal with regional issues such as arms control, water problems, and economic cooperation—this, in addition to the direct political talks between Israel and its neighbors, and Israel and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

[In a report on pages 1 and 4 of the 29 April issue of Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew, Avner Regev and Moti Bassok report that Shamir told the delegation from Montreal, "Israel is encouraged by the fact that many Middle East elements who had met with Baker support a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, although the question is what practical manifestation this will assume. As for Security Council Resolution 242 (territory for peace), the Americans have agreed that Israel maintain its interpretation of it for the moment."

[In a report on page 3 of the same issue of 'AL HAMISHMAR, Moti Bassok says that "at the Cabinet session yesterday, Shamir said that before Israel allows the EC to join the process, it would like to examine that body's political attitudes on issues with which it had disagreed with Israel for more than a decade, including the Venice Declaration. Israel would want to know whether, even after the Gulf war, Europe supports the PLO, the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the repartition of Jerusalem before it decides whether to accept its inclusion in the peace process."]

Shamir Sees No 'Rift' With U.S.

TA2904112091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said that there was no reason for any rift with the United States and added that there was no mention of a crisis in any of the reports he had received.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reported that Mr. Shamir made these statements after participating in a session of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The prime minister pointed out that this was not the first time that there had been talk of impending crises. It has been proven in the past, however, that these predicted crises failed to occur.

Speaking at the session, Yitzhaq Shamir said that there was no reason to despair. Political efforts are continuing, and it was a delusion to think that there would be no difficulties. Difficulties, however, have existed in the past and will continue to crop up in the future. When one considers the determination shown by the United States, there is good reason to believe that the process may succeed.

PLO Delegates' Stand on Joint Delegation Role

TA2804085891 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 28 Apr 91 p 2

[By Smadar Peri]

[Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the PLO's political department, who is considered a close associate of Yasir 'Arafat, admitted over the weekend that 'Arafat's support for Saddam Husayn since the beginning of the Gulf

crisis was a mistake. He said this during a 3.5-hour meeting in Granada, Spain, with Israeli Knesset members [MK's] and members of the left.

The meeting was attended by an Israeli delegation that included three MK's—Arye Eli'av, Dedi Zucker, and 'Abd-al-Wahab Darawshah—as well as Efrayim Sne, Ya'el Dayan, Latif Dori, and Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi. They held an open dialogue over the weekend with a delegation of personalities from the territories headed by Hanna Sinyurah and a PLO delegation led by Dr. Nabil Sha'th. This was the first time the organization's official spokesman, Ahmad 'Abd-al- Rahman, also attended such a meeting.

MK Arye Eli'av reported that "the PLO representatives discussed their desire to participate in negotiations with Israel within the framework of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. They reiterated their right to an independent state, and tried to 'instill calm' by saying that the Palestinian state will not be set up at once, but in stages...."

Palestinian Leader Released From Prison

TA2804102991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1025 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Sari Nusaybah, one of the most prominent Palestinian leaders in the territories, was released from jail today after spending three months in administrative detention. Our correspondent Udi Segal reports that Nusaybah was placed under administrative detention on charges of having assisted Iraq during the Gulf war with the help of his fax machine.

Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz Arrives in Amman

JN2804202891 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2020 GMT 28 Apr 91

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz arrived in Amman this afternoon at the end of his tour of Arab Maghreb Union countries.

Al-Masri: Progress in Peace Depends on Israel

JN2704123991 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri by Suhayl Khuri on 27 April in Amman—recorded]

[Text] [Khuri] Mr. Foreign Minister, what is the extent of the progress made by the U.S. secretary of state during his recent tour of the region?

[Al-Masri] From the official statements Mr. James Baker has made—and he is always reserved when it comes to choosing his words because he does not want to discuss all the details regarding the opinions of the various countries before the press—and from the statements of officials in other Arab countries, it seems there is some progress, perhaps very slight progress. It is certain, however, that the progress he made in Israel was less fortunate than that of the other countries. In Israel, there is talk about five points that were agreed upon. It is worth highlighting here that these points were announced by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi. If we study these points closely, I do not believe that they have actually been agreed on, or that they are of any significance. We must refer to Baker's statements that there are some satisfactory responses; however, there are also many unsatisfactory responses. The American negotiator will have to return to Israel to get new or other answers from the Israeli negotiator.

[Khuri] Therefore, Mr. Minister, do you expect the secretary of state to return quickly to the region?

[Al-Masri] I cannot say when he will return, whether it will be soon or sometime later. I believe his last tour is not really the final one. It will be followed by another tour, if not more.

[Khuri] What does Jordan expect from Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh's tour of the Middle East?

[Al-Masri] We expect a great deal. There is a general agreement that the Soviet Union will be one of the countries calling for a conference on peace. In addition, the Soviet Union has many cards up its sleeve which it could play. The Soviet view continues to be similar to the Arab view. The Soviet Union is calling for implementing legitimacy and recognizes that the meaning and philosophy of Resolution 242 dictates that Israel must withdraw and exchange land for peace. The Soviet Union also knows that the Israeli settlement in the occupied territories is a cancerous settlement, whose roots lie primarily in the immigration pouring into Israel from the Soviet Union. This is an issue the Soviet Union must handle very clearly with Israel. Israel must facilitate the peace process. The Soviet Union can play an important role in this field.

[Khuri] Mr. Minister, looking at the political activity as a whole taking place in the region and in some concerned capitals, are you optimistic that the peace process has actually begun to move?

[Al-Masri] We must note here that the Arab-Israeli problem is a complicated issue which has been festering for many years. During the past four decades, there has been no real or continuous effort to solve it. This is perhaps the first time that attempts—which I can safely describe as serious—are being made. All the Arabs have indicated readiness to deal with these facts and the U.S. efforts to attain a just peace. There remains the Israeli stand. In my estimation, I believe that many issues depend on the Israeli reaction and the extent to which it responds to international efforts, especially U.S. efforts. I canot say that I am pessimistic, but there are many things that must be achieved before we start talking about optimism. These things depend primarily on Israel.

[Khuri] We thank Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri. Thank you.

Baker Moscow Trip Viewed With 'Guarded Optimism'

JN2404143691 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 24 Apr 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "Baker's Visit to Moscow: Cautious Optimism"]

[Text] The sudden change in the itinerary of James Baker's visit to the region's countries, his scheduled visit to Moscow, and his forthcoming talks with his Soviet counterpart that are primarily designated for the Middle East crisis, further demonstrate the seriousness of the current U.S. diplomacy in the region. At the same time, this change indicates Washington's desire to start coordination, the first of its kind, with Moscow on procedural matters pertaining to the convening of the aspired international peace conference.

While we follow the U.S. secretary of state's moves and express guarded optimism about his decision to convene such a conference, the signals coming out of the Israeli side call for pessimism, especially since the leaders of the Zionist entity are continuing their policies, which can be described as a series of clear signals telling those concerned, including James Baker himself, that no tangible progress can be made toward a just and comprehensive peace in this region.

Therefore, we remain cautious about the practical results that the U.S. secretary of state's tour may produce, as

long as Israel's leaders do not sense sufficient U.S. determination to get them to show more flexibility toward the requirements for achieving peace, and as long as they do not feel tangible pressure to get them to stop their rejection of every peace initiative for solving the crisis, which has been used as a natural surrogate for all the other problems, wars, and tension in the Middle East.

What arouses fear, reservation, and caution about Baker's talks in Moscow today is that this sudden change in the program of the U.S. secretary of state may be aimed at obtaining a prior Soviet concession for Israel, such as the resumption of the diplomatic relations that were severed in 1967, as a price for Israel's approval of Soviet participation in patronizing the proposed peace conference. The conference may end with a ceremonial session after which the parties to the conference will leave without any achievement on the road to peace and with Israel making certain gains like the resumption of relations with Moscow. Hence, we hope that the extensive diplomatic move by the U.S. secretary of state will not encourage Israel to promote the settlement program and make new diplomatic gains. Afterwards everything will remain unchanged and James Baker's initiative will be recorded as another link in the series of missed opportunities for achieving a just peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

The fears and doubts that haunt even those who are optimistic about the seriousness of James Baker's current moves are completely justified, especially since Shamir has announced that he will not be the Israeli ruler who exchanges land for peace, since the Israeli leaders are establishing more settlements every day in the occupied Arab territories, and since the Israeli Government itself asserts that it will not abandon the Golan Heights under any circumstances.

King Addresses Cabinet on Local, Arab Issues

JN2704211991 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] This evening His Majesty King Husayn convened a meeting with Prime Minister Mudar Badran and His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court in attendance.

His Majesty King Husayn then chaired a Cabinet session focusing on the circumstances the Arab world is now experiencing and the challenges it is facing. He stressed that this juncture calls for prompt and enlightened action on the local, Arab, and international fronts.

On the domestic front, his majesty stressed the need for increased cohesion and alertness to the circumstances our nation is experiencing. He expressed confidence that the reinforcement and protection of the democratic march that we have chosen call for greater participation in shouldering responsibility and having respect for dissidence and for human rights within frameworks that should safeguard the major achievements we have made.

His Majesty King Husayn urged further dialogue among diverse tendencies and minds in the same spirit that permeated the deliberations of the National Charter Committee, which has led to increased understanding and closeness of ranks and has laid foundations that may be consolidated before endorsing the National Charter and organizing political activity.

On the Arab front, His Majesty King Husayn stressed the need for creating circumstances favorable to rebuilding the Arab edifice so as to ensure the successful handling of the challenges and the critical circumstances we are living through. He said that for Jordan, the Palestinian issue in terms of reality, location, and responsibility is one of right, life, and future and must be handled accordingly. His majesty emphasized that Jordan will fulfill its duty in the spirit of its abiding principles and will help the Palestinian people as they pursue their legitimate rights on their soil in the manner they see fit. Toward that end, Jordan will continue Arab, Islamic, and international contacts to give impetus to the just and comprehensive peace process on the lines of international legitimacy and a commitment to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. His majesty concluded his remarks to the Council of Ministers by giving his blessings to the well-intentioned efforts being made to address the main issues facing the citizenry and the homeland.

Militias Continue Transfer of Arms, Ammunition

Junblatt Agrees to Army Deployment

NC2804063991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has announced that he has asked the head of the military committee charged with receiving the militias' weapons to begin taking the necessary steps as of 28 April.

Al-Murr made this statement after meeting with Ministers Walid Junblatt and Marwan Hamadah at the Defense Ministry yesterday. Sharif Fayyad, Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] deputy leader, and Akram Shuhayyib [PSP Political Bureau member] also attended the meeting.

Al-Murr said Junblatt had expressed his consent to implementing the cabinet resolution on extending the state's authority over Lebanese territory and the PSP's welcome of the legitimate forces' deployment in the mountains on the scheduled date of 1 May.

Dallul on Deployment

NC2604060391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Minister Muhsin Dallul has stressed that the Lebanese army and the legitimate forces will deploy on the set date, and that the resistance's weapons are linked with UN Resolution 425. He added that these weapons will be unnecessary if this resolution is implemented, and that they will not be allowed if they are intended for other purposes.

Ja'ja': LF Committed to Disbandment

NC2704190591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Lebanese Forces [LF] Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja' has affirmed that the LF are committed to the dates the government has set for disbanding the militias. In return, he urged the state to honor these dates so the militias can be disbanded and an agreement can be reached on assimilating the members and officials of the militias into army and government departments. He added that all these matters need to be arranged.

In an interview with Voice of the Mountain radio, Ja'ja' said: I am not demanding that the Army deployment be delayed, but that the arrangements for assimiliating the militia members be expedited. Ja'ja' stressed he is in favor of drawing up clear guidelines for coopertion with Syria and that he is not opposed to such cooperation. He said, however, that he is against any word, sentence, hint, or anything else that would belittle our sovereignty, freedom, or independence as Lebanese. He added: We want harmony between theories and practical application so we can maintain our free political position.

Ja'ja' pointed out that the purpose behind contacts with the Syrians is not to establish LF-Syrian relations, but to reach an understanding on a clear Lebanese-Syrian relationship.

Dib on LF 'Loopholes'

NC2804210591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Before leaving for Damascus this evening, Defense Minister Michel al-Murr expressed his hope that a solution will be reached with the Lebanese Forces this evening regarding the weapons handover, because everyone wishes for an end to the Lebanese ordeal.

In the meantime, Minister of State Roger Dib has stressed that the Lebanese Forces will fulfill its commitment to facilitating the Lebanese Army deployment immediately once a practical solution to assimilate its personnel is cleared up. He noted a slowdown by those tasked with studying the assimilation issue and the loopholes that may prevent the security and administrative departments from assimilating these personnel.

Lebanese Forces Begin Handover

NC2904153891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Report by Johnny Munayir from Ghidras—recorded]

[Excerpt] Staff Major General Fu'ad Malik, chief of the Lebanese Forces General Staff, asserted a few moments ago that the Lebanese Army will deploy in Kasrawan and Jubayl on schedule. He added that the handover of the Lebanese Army's weapons, which the Lebanese Forces had in their possession, officially began at this moment. This occurred before the beginning of the second session of negotiations between the Lebanese Forces and the Lebanese Army, which began at midday today at the headquarters of the Lebanese Forces Commander in Ghidras. The Lebanese Forces' delegation included Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Fu'ad Malik and other military officials. The Army's delegation comprised Brigadier General Michel Mu'ayki, Colonel Suhayl Khuri, and Colonel Michel Sulayman. [passage omitted]

ADP Hands Weapons to Syrians

NC2904145691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] The Arab Democratic Party [ADP] in the North today handed its weapons over to the Syrian Arab forces. The weapons involved in the exchange were three 160-mm guns, seven RPG-10 [rocket-propelled grenade] launchers, eight 120-mm mortar guns, seven Korean rocket launchers, 24 12.7-mm machine guns, 50 RPG-7 launchers, 20 DsHK guns, 500 medium-caliber guns, and 900 tons of ammunition.

The weapons exchange was supervised by ADP forces commander Muhsin 'Id and Syrian Major Nabil.

PSP Weapons, Tanks 'Collected'

NC2704074591 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] sources have announced that the party has collected its weapons in three centers and will begin handing them over when it receives the necessary notification from the Syrian forces command. The sources said that Soviet-made T-54 and T-55 tanks have been assembled at the 'Ayn Zhalta barracks, while other tanks have been concentrated at another barracks in al-Safa. Heavy artillery pieces and rocket launchers have been amassed at the al-'Amir Qasim barracks in Bayt al-Din. The sources added that the PSP's weapons stores in Kafra in al-Biqa' were placed at the Syrian forces' disposal as of yesterday.

Transfers Arms, Ammo to Syrians

NC2704180191 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] The Progressive Socialist Party today began handing over its weapons and ammunitions to the Syrian Arab forces. The PSP brought weapons from Bayt al-Din and 'Ayn Zhalta barracks and handed them to a Syrian military team led by Staff Colonel Amin Jatan. PSP Popular Army Chief of Staff Walid Safi and PSP arms official Walid Abu-'Ayshah supervised the operation. Staff Col. Jatan said that the handover of arms has begun and is continuing.

PSP sources said that 300 tons of ammunition and heavy-caliber machine guns were handed over and that cannons and tanks will be handed over tomorrow.

According to the correspondent of the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, more than 50 trucks carrying ammunitions were involved in the transfer, which is supervised by elements of the Popular Army and the Syrian forces.

Further on PSP Weapons Handover

NC2804112691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party sources said today that the PSP will shortly begin turning over its weapons to the military committee charged with this task at the 'Ayn Zhalta barracks. Arrangements for the turnover were finalized at a meeting between committee members and the PSP military leadership.

The PSP Secretariat has issued a statement announcing the decision to begin handing over the party's weapons and ammunition as of today. The statement referred to the agreement reached between Minister Junblatt and Defense Minister Michel al-Murr on dispatching the committee entrusted with receiving the weapons to the Popular Liberation Army Command Headquarters for this purpose.

In accordance with Junblatt's decision to return the weapons supplied by Syria to their original source, the handover of weapons at the 'Ayn Zhalta and Bayt al-Din warehouses is continuing for the second day in a row today under the supervision of Popular Liberation Army and Syrian officers. PSP sources said that 20 T-55 tanks, 30 130-mm guns, and 1,200 tons of ammunition have been handed over so far, adding that the entire process will be completed in 10 days.

In another development, the Arab Knights organization of the Arab Democratic Party announced in a statement that it has decided to assemble its heavy- and medium-caliber weapons prior to handing them over to the Syrian command within the next 48 hours.

PSP Official Cited on Handover

NC2804151791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The heavy weapons of the popular army, the forces of Martyr Kamal Junblatt, were turned over to the Lebanese Army at the 'Ayn Zhalta Barracks today in the presence of Brigadier General (Michel M'isa) from the Lebanese army command; Walid Safi, chief of staff of the popular army forces; and Colonel Amin al-Batal from the Syrian Arab forces. The weapons consisted of armored cars, T-54 and T-55 tanks, (MD) tracked vehicles, mine-clearing vehicles, and mortars of various calibers.

The weapons were transported on Syrian Arab forces trucks and transporters by way of the 'Ayn Zhalta-Sawfar, Shtawrah-al-Biqa' road.

Lieutenant Colonel Sharif Fayyad, secretary general of the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP], said that the PSP made the decision to hand over its weapons because it is convinced that the peace process has begun and that al-Ta'if agreement is the means to achieve peace. He indicated that the handing over of the weapons does not mean that the conflict in Lebanon has ended; it means that the military conflict has ended but that the political conflict continues. This is natural in a democratic country such as Lebanon, he said.

PSP Resumes Transfer 29 Apr

NC2904111491 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1045 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] The Progressive Socialist Party resumed its handover of weapons and ammunition to the Syrian Army today. The second batch, which includes 20 T-55 tanks and some ammunition, was handed over in the 'Ayn Zhalta barracks at 1100 today.

As for the weapons originally belonging to the Lebanese army, the PSP handed over four M-113 armored vehicles at the same barracks today. A total of 10 trucks will be handed over later.

Amal To Disband Military Wing

NC2704073591 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] At a meeting attended by Grand Ja'farite Mufti Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan, the Amal Movement's Central Council ratified the decision by the movement's political bureau to dissolve the military wing and join the peace process to consolidate social justice and draw up a formula for a new Lebanon on firm foundations.

The council also decided that all the movement's material and manpower resources should be activated to resist the Israeli enemy and its agents in accordance with the movement's well-known methods. The council declared its commitment to the UN resolutions. It stressed that Lebanon would derive no benefit from participating in an international or regional conference. It called on the government to exert efforts to secure the implementation of the UN resolutions, particularly Resolution 425. It stressed the movement's policy of openness to all parties who believe in Lebanon's unity and Arabism, in establishing a regime of social justice, and in eliminating deprivation among the Lebanese people, whatever their sect.

Damascus Talks Cover Weapons, Hostages' Release

Hizballah, Other Participants Noted

NC2804090391 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Delegations from various Lebanese political, ulema, and media organizations have gone to Damascus. Prominent among them is a Hizballah delegation led by Secretary General His Eminence Shaykh al-Tufayli and consisting of Their Eminences 'Abbas al-Musawi, Hasan Nasrallah, Ibrahim al-Amin, Shaykh Muhammad Yazbik, and Shaykh Na'im Qasim, and an Islamic Amal delegation led by Husayn al-Musawi.

Delegations from the Muslim ulema grouping, consisting of Their Eminences Shaykh Zuhayr Kanj, Shaykh Mahir Hammud, and Shaykh Ahmad al-Zayn, and from the al-Biqa' ulema grouping, the faithful resistance, and the Jabal 'Amil ulema committee, also have gone to Damascus.

Ulema delegations and cultural figures from various governorates in Syria also have traveled to Damascus to meet with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Junblatt, Fadlallah Meet Iranian President

NC2804175491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr, Minister of State Roger Dib, and Minister of Agriculture Muhsin Dallul met with Syrian officials in Damascus at 1700 today.

Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani met in Damascus with Minister Walid Junblatt, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, and a delegation representing the Islamic Group led by Fathi Yakan. The Iranian weapons in Lebanon and the issue of Western hostages held in Lebanon were discussed by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

In a statement prior to his departure for Damascus, Minister Michel al-Murr said: We hope, in the same way we agreed last night with the Progressive Socialist Party leadership regarding the weapons issue, that we will reach a solution with the Lebanese Forces this evening. We all hope that the Lebanese ordeal will soon come to an end.

Ibrahim, Ministers Return

NC2704080391 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Contacts are continuing about the handover of militia weapons and the Palestinian position on this matter. Mediator Muhsin Ibrahim [leader of the Communist Action Organization in Lebanon] and Ministers Michel al-Murr and Muhsin Dallul yesterday returned from Damascus, where they held talks with Syrian officials, Vice President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam in particular, on ways to implement the Council of Ministers decision on disbanding the non-Lebanese militias.

Minister Dallul returned to al-Biqa'. Muhsin Ibrahim first visited al-Mukhtarah to brief Minister Walid Junblatt on the results of his talks in Damascus and then left for Sidon to meet with Palestinian leaders there. He also met with Mustafa Sa'd, leader of the Nasirite Popular Organization.

Ibrahim Discusses Arms Issue With PLO Leaders

NC2804182591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Mediator Muhsin Ibrahim, Communist Action Organization secretary general, discussed with Mustafa Sa'd, leader of the Nasirite Popular Organization, the Palestinian weapons issue in Sidon today.

Ibrahim also met with PLO leaders in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp. Ibrahim said that official and political exchanges will be conducted to determine the next step in Lebanese-Palestinian relations. He added that today's meeting was devoted to explaining the Lebanese situation both in terms of the march to implement the accord and the liberation of the south. Ibrahim pointed out that his talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam have centered on finding the best means to ensure positive implementation of the adopted security decisions and measures.

Fadlallah: Hostage Release on Humanitarian Basis

LD2904114591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] The eminent Lebanese clergyman, 'Allamah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, has invited the Muslims to confront the U.S. expansionist policy in the world, calling on them to pursue the line of Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, which is based on opposing domination of the East and the West and the struggle against the hegemony of U.S.-led global arrogance.

According to an IRNA dispatch from Beirut, he was made the remarks during the Friday prayers sermons at the Imam Reza mosque in the southern sector of Beirut. He referred to the joint conspiracy of the Zionist regime and the U.S. under the title of "Restoration of Peace in the Region and Removal of Difficulties Between the Arabs and Israel". He said: The inhabitants of Jabal 'Amil and the western al-Biqa' in Lebanon face the danger of being kicked out of their homes when southern Lebanon is annexed into occupied Palestine.

Referring to the problem of the foreign hostages in Lebanon, he demanded the release of all hostages on humanitarian grounds.

Islamic Resistance Claims Operations in South

NC2604180791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] The Islamic resistance men have carried out two operations against the occupation forces and their agent militiamen in the village of al-Tiri. An Islamic resistance statement noted that their fighters detonated an explosive device near a patrol of the [Lahd] militia, killing four of them. The statement added that the resistance men detonated another device near a patrol of the occupation army. A one-and-a-half-hour clash ensued, followed by helicopters combing the area of the clash. The occupation troops' artillery shelled the village of Haddathah, which is under the jurisdiction of the Nepalese contingent of the UN force. A number of homes in the village were damaged.

In another development, the Lahd militiamen shelled the village of Rshaf with mortars. According to sources in the UN force, seven mortars fell in the village, where the Nepalese contingent is deployed. A number of homes in the village were damaged.

Amal-Palestinian 'Armed Altercation' Near Tyre

NC2704101591 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] According to security sources in the south, an armed altercation occurred between Amal Movement members and Palestinian elements in the al-Hawsh area near Tyre on the night of 25 April after the Palestinians took over an ammunition store belonging to Amal. The Palestinians detained a number of the Amal members. They were subsequently released, without their weapons, after elements of the Army's 31st Battalion, which is stationed at the Tyre barracks, intervened.

Soldier Wounded in Ambush of Patrol in South

NC2804114191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1045 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] A military source in the southern region command in Sidon has revealed that a Lebanese army patrol was ambushed by unidentified gunmen in Tyre near the Shabriha camp at 2100 yesterday. Patrol members returned their attackers' fire. One soldier was wounded.

'Violent' SLA-Nasirite Clashes in South

NC2804114291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Violent clashes have broken out between members of the South Lebanese Army [SLA] and the Nasirite Popular Organization on the Kafr Falus, Lib'a, and 'Ayn al-Mir axes. All types of weapons are being used in the fighting.

SLA Clashes With Fundamentalists East of Sidon

NC2904100891 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] According to security sources in the south, intermittent clashes between the South Lebanese Forces [SLA] and gunmen from fundamentalist Islamic organizations have been under way since 0830 today along the Kafr Falus-Lib'a-'Ayn al-Mir axis east of Sidon.

Israeli Aircraft Overfly Sidon, Camps

NC2804182491 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Israeli warplanes have flown over Sidon and nearby camps at a low altitude and drew antiaircraft fire.

Iran's Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Delegation Arrive

Al-Asad Receives President

LD2704181891 Tehran IRNA in English 1733 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 27, IRNA—Iran's President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi- Rafsanjani said upon his arrival Saturday the most important aim of his maiden visit to Syria as president of the Islamic Republic was to hold talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and other Syrian officials.

"There are several regional issues that warrant discussion by both heads of state," Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who started his three day state visit, told reporters at Damascus airport.

President al-Asad, who received his Iranian counterpart, noted that contacts and consultations between the two countries have been quite regular over the years, based on their "profound, strategic ties".

Iran and Syria have frequently exchanged views of "great importance" on various issues over the past few years, he added.

The Syrian president felt confident that the current summit will be held in the same "spirit of brotherhood and friendship".

According to the last reports, the two heads of state have started their first round of talks.

Leaders Meet Reporters

JN2704120891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1120 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, arrived in Damascus at 1115 today on an official and cordial visit to the Syrian Arab Republic in response to a invitation from President Hafiz al-Asad.

President Hafiz al-Asad was at the head of those welcoming President Hashemi-Rafsanjani on his arrival at Damascus international airport. [passage omitted]

The two presidents left for the VIP lounge, where they responded to questions by the press.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: This visit has many objectives. At the top of these objectives is to visit his Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and the friendly Syrian people. He added: Of course, there are many issues in our region and matters that have to do with our neighbors. We will discuss these. In addition, there are many matters between the two countries, not to mention the question of expanding cooperation. The more we talk about these issues, the more positive results we will attain.

His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad responded to a question by the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY. He said: First of all, I would like to warmly welcome my brother, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He is a dear friend and brother. Contacts between us have been continuous for many years. As you know, Syria and Iran are bound by strong, solid, and strategic relations. As has been the case for many years, we exchange viewpoints, consult each other, and discuss all affairs that are of interest to our two countries and the peoples in the region. Relations between us have always been strong, stable, and progressive.

President al-Asad added: As my brother Hashemi-Rafsanjani has pointed out, I believe that there are many matters which we must discuss. These matters deal with several of the important events the region is experiencing. We have always acted, and we will continue to act for the good of our people and the peoples of the region. We are two countries which enjoy completely free decisonmaking, and we have always sought to use this freedom in the service of our two peoples in Syria and Iran and in service of all the Arab and Islamic peoples, as I mentioned a short while ago.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani is a beloved and respected guest. In my name, and on behalf of the Syrian command and the Syrian people, I once again welcome him and the brother Iranian leaders who accompany him. There is no doubt that we will have lengthy talks. I would like to affirm in advance that these discussions and meetings will be marked with the spirit of brotherhood and friendship which exists between us. We will emerge with what we believe will be in the interest of Syria and Iran, as well as that of the Arab and Islamic peoples.

The two presidents then left the airport in an official motorcade for Tishrin Palace, where the guest president will be staying.

Presidents al-Asad and Hashemi-Rafsanjani held a a meeting at Tishrin Palace. [passage omitted]

Locals Cheer Arrival

LD2704130691 Tehran IRNA in English 1108 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 27, IRNA—Iranian President Hojat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani heading a high-ranking delegation arrived here Saturday noon and was welcomed at Damascus International Airport by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and other senior officials.

At the airport the national anthems of Iran and Syria were played and a 21-gun salute was fired and the two presidents reviewed the guard of honour.

En route to Tishrin Palace, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani was cheered by the local people and a large number of Iranian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Afghan, and Pakistani nationals residing in Damascus who had lined up along the street.

The two presidents will start first round of talks here later today.

During the three-day official visit President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his entourage will exchange views with the Syrian officials on the latest regional development, the Persian Gulf crisis, the situation in Palestine and Lebanon as well as Tehran-Damascus relations and ways of further expanding them.

The Iranian president is to pay a 4-day official visit to Ankara next Monday at the invitation of President Turgut Ozal of Turkey.

Papers View Visit

JN2804081791 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 28 Apr 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In its comment today, AL-BA'TH deals with the importance of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to Damascus, while indicating that the Syrian Arab-Iranian relations, since the beginning of the Islamic revolution, have been conspicuous for their frankness, clarity, and identical viewpoints on many issues. These relations have, therefore, remained pure and exemplary, as relations between countries and peoples should be.

AL-BA'TH adds: Since the first moments of the Islamic revolution, Syria realized that this revolution would be a genuine parallel to the joint Arab action in confronting the enemies of Arabism and Islam. It also realized that establishing special and distinct relations between Iran and all Arab countries is certainly in the interest of both sides, against their common enemy.

AL-BA'TH notes that Syria has always called for an Iranian role in the higher issues of the region in view of the existing bonds between Iran and the Arabs with regard to many issues.

In its comment, AL-BA'TH indicates that the fabricated, oppressive war launched by the Iraqi regime against the Islamic revolution in Iran aimed, as it later became clear, at killing the revolution at its outset; consequently, destroying the capabilities and abilities of both Iraq and Iran. Over the eight years of war, the losses were not limited to Iran and Iraq, but also reached the Arab and Muslim nations. All realized that the position of Syria, which stood as it should have, was correct. In fact, Syria's position spared the region, the Arab Gulf states in particular, many disasters.

In its comment, the paper stresses the great importance of Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's current visit to Damascus because it comes after the Gulf crisis and the resulting developments and changes. In other words, the talks between Presidents al-Asad and Hashemi-Rafsanjani will tackle what could be tackled in cooperation with the other sides in the region; the Arab Gulf states in particular.

AL-BA'TH concludes: In addition, the visit will, no doubt, serve the hopes and aspirations of Arabs and Muslims everywhere in view of the strong and firm Syrian-Iranian relations. It will also effectively contribute in strengthening Iranian-Gulf relations, which for many years were harmed and damaged by Saddam's regime.

In one of its comments, TISHRIN highlights the great importance of President RHashemi-afsanjani's visit to Damascus and his talks with leader al-Asad in light of the recent developments in the Gulf in particular, and the Middle East in general, and in light of Syria's constant endeavor to revive Arab and Muslim solidarity and crystallize a number of principles and givens for real cooperation between the Arab and Muslim states in a manner which entrenches the joint struggle against the Israeli enemy to liberate the sanctities under Israeli occupation.

Concluding, TISHRIN stresses that Presidents al-Asad and Hashemi-Rafsanjani's talks in Damascus will bring important results in favor of the Arab and Muslim issues, particularly with regard to the Palestine question and aggrieved Jerusalem. Syria has always worked to unify ranks to thwart Israel's expansion and judaization plans. Syria does not forfeit any right or bargain over the Arab occupied land as President al-Asad stressed in his speech welcoming President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Visit Termed 'Significant'

LD2804151791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1106 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In the name of God and greetings to you. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, responding to an official invitation from Mr. Hafiz al-Asad, the president of Arab Syria, arrived in Damascus yesterday at the head of a high-ranking delegation. He received a unique welcome from the government and various strata of the people.

The visit by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Syria, his first foreign trip since he became president, is of significant importance because it takes place when the region, due to the war for oil and its aftermath, is facing various changes which necessitate an exchange of views and discussions between the heads of the two friendly and brother countries.

During his three-day stay in Damascus our country's president will hold discussions with the Syrian president on regional developments, the Persian Gulf war, bilateral ties and ways of expanding them, and the situation in Palestine and Lebanon. Also, he will receive Palestinian and Lebanese personalities and will hold discussions with them about the latest political developments in Palestine and Lebanon.

In connection with the war for oil and its aftermath, issues concerning the structure of regional security, the internal situation in Iraq, and the problem of Palestine—

alongside the U.S. efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis—are the main issues which comprise the axis of discussions between the heads of the two countries of Iran and Syria.

On the necessity of establishing a security structure to stop aggression and war mongering throughout the region, the two countries of Iran and Syria hold common views and both stress the unconditional pull-out of foreign military forces from the region, and that such a security system should be found through the cooperation of the countries of the region and without giving any role to world powers. Emphasizing the geopolitical conditions of the region and in order to expand the efficiency of the proposed security system, Iran desires that security be limited to the countries of the Persian Gulf and in close coordination with similar structures in the Arab world or the Middle East.

The internal situation in Iraq and the unrest prevalent as a result of the perpetual suppression of the popular uprising and the Iraqi Government's rejection of people's demands, are also among other isuses which are going to be discussed by Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Hafiz al-Asad. An exchange of views on that topic for the two countries bordering Iraq is significant because unrest inside Iraq has so far effected the border countries and caused a mass exodus of around 1.5 million refugees to Iran and Turkey. Iran and Syria, despite both countries' rejection of any interference in the internal affairs of Iraq, have called, many times, on Saddam Husayn, the head of the ruling system in Iraq, to respect the will of the majority of the people and to stop the current suppression.

The situation in Palestine and the Muslim people's uprising in that holy land, due to its precedence in the Iranian and Syrian foreign policies, is one of the important subjects of discussion between the heads of the two countries. The significance of the two countries' coordination over the problem of Palestine is due to the fact that the United States, since the end of the war for oil, is trying to resolve that old and persistant crisis of the region to the benefit of the Zionist regime. In that regard, Iran considers Israel a cancerous and infectious tumor in the heart of the region and also considers a solution to the Middle East crisis only through liberation of the Palestinian territory and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homelands.

On the other hand, the current situation in Lebanon and the efforts of the majority of that country's Muslims to gain political and social rights holds a particular place in talks between the high-ranking officials of Iran and Syria. At the same time, our country's stance vis-a-vis the situation in Lebanon is to make efforts and to cooperate in order to remove the roots of insecurity and instability in that country.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his Syrian counterpart will discuss the Islamic government of Iran's views on the return and establishment of security in Lebanon and ways to support the Islamic resistance that bravely fights against Israel's aggressiveness.

With regard to the variety of issues which are going to be discussed between the officials of the two countries during the visit of our country's president to Syria, political observers believe that visit is particularly significant and will have positive effects on the political future of the region.

'Text' of Dinner Speeches

JN2704200291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1912 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 27 Apr (SANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad hosted a dinner banquet this evening at the al-Dimashqiyah Hall in honor of Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The banquet was attended by the delegation accompanying President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. It was also attended by Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the deputy prime ministers, ministers, assistant ministers, the deputy head of Damascus Governorate's Executive Bureau, heads of the information institutions, and directors of the Foreign Ministry departments.

President Hafiz al-Asad delivered a speech during the banquet. The text follows:

Mr. President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, dear Iranian friends, gentlemen:

I am very pleased, brother president, to welcome you heartily on your first visit to Syria as president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and also to welcome the members of the Iranian delegation. We highly appreciate the fact that you have chosen ours as the first country to visit outside Iran since you were elected president of the republic. We welcome you to our country as a representative of the Iranian Muslim people. We are very proud of the ties between your people and our people—ties that have roots in a history linking the two peoples since the dawn of Islam on the path of right guidance.

The Islamic revolution in Iran has provided the base and paved the way for strengthening relations between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran in view of the revolution's declared objectives, on which we both agree because they are based on the message of Islam and its noble principles and call to spread justice, resist all forms of evil, and confront injustice, tyranny, and aggression.

And so, consultations between officials in our two countries have continued throughout the years since the Islamic revolution in Iran. This has contributed to the establishment of strategic relations between Syria and Iran. The past years, including the events they have witnessed, have proved that these relations are in the interest of our peoples and the peoples of the region, especially since our meeting on the path of right is a

source of strength for us and for all Arabs and Muslims, and a support for our just causes. In this regard, it pleases me to recall our talks in Tehran during my visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran approximately seven months ago. This visit, along with the spirit of friendship and love that permeated those talks, and their results, have paved the way for further promotion of the relations between our two countries, and expressed our desire to achieve more in this field.

We returned from that visit pleased with what we saw in terms of the high morale that distinguishes the Muslim Iranian people, the determination of the Islamic Iranian leadership and the Iranian people to reconstruct what was destroyed by the war, and the resolution to struggle to save the Muslims' holy places and territories that are under the Zionist occupation.

Brother President, our happiness with your presence in Damascus today is coupled with a high estimation of the importance of this visit in light of the recent circumstances and events the Gulf region has witnessed as a result of the Iraqi ruler's invasion of the fraternal State of Kuwait and the consequences of that invasion in terms of tragedies and catastrophes the Iraqi and Kuwaiti peoples have suffered. These catastrophes and tragedies have affected the entire region. They could have been averted had the Iraqi ruler responded to the calls of goodwill and the good offices that were offered to spare Iraq and Kuwait the catastrophe and to save the region in general from its effects.

Brother President, you recall that we held a lengthy discussion on the Gulf crisis in Tehran before all hope was lost of averting the tragic consequences of this crisis. Following our meeting in Tehran, both Syria and Iran continued their efforts to avert the specter of war, and many others exerted efforts for the same reason but to no avail, because the Iraqi ruler lent a deaf ear and met every sincere initiative with unprecedented stubbornness until he brought death and destruction to Iraq and Kuwait. Soon after the disaster, he accepted everything that he had rejected previously and even more than that. He caused the foreign forces to come to Iraq. He dealt with them through negotiations and agreements, when before he had considered their presence in the region a pretext for not withdrawing from Kuwait, while he was the reason for their coming to the region. He has turned hundreds of thousands of Iraqi citizens into refugees in their own country, refugees who need protection and relief aid. He also turned Iraq from a rich country into a country burdened by debt, and a country that has lost many of its installations and whose resources are mortgaged for many years to compensate for what it has lost. In addition to this, he has polluted the environment in an unprecedented manner.

We are pained by what has happened to Iraq and Kuwait and we sympathize with the people of Iraq as they suffer and the people of Kuwait as they strive to rehabilitate their country. We stand opposed to any effort to compromise the unity of the people of Iraq or the country's territorial integrity. It is only natural that we repeat that this region's security is essentially the responsibility of its people. I recall that you and we were equally alarmed during my visit to Iran about the potential threat to the unity of Iraq. We gave the matter due importance and we decided to make joint moves to forestall this possibility. We got in touch with numerous countries and we were prepared, as we still are, to do much in the cause of Iraq's unity.

At the same time, Israel's continued occupation of Arab territory calls for us to work in earnest in the interest of an effective Arab and Islamic solidarity in the face of this aggression and in order to tackle the threat of Israeli expansionist designs.

As we emphasize our resistance to this aggression, we would express our desire for a just and comprehensive peace in the region based on an end to Israeli occupation, the liberation of occupied Arab land, and recognition of Palestinian national rights.

In the meantime, the United States has declared in the words of its President that, with the Gulf war over, it is resolved to exert itself to promote a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict. We have heard the American President himself make a statement to that effect. He also sent his foreign secretary [title as received], James Baker, on successive missions to the region to pursue these efforts.

We have welcomed this development in the American position since, above all, we want a just and comprehensive peace, and second, we see in this development a positive stance, should this U.S. initiative lead to the desired goal.

Neither Syria nor the Arabs in general will be the ones to abort this continuing peace initiative. The one to bring about the collapse of this initiative will be Israel, by insisting on its intransigent positions as shown by Israeli official statements flying in the face of the international community, including the United States, and rejecting UN resolutions that represent international legitimacy. Israel is thus defying the whole world in a manner unprecedented in this age.

In any case, the world will remain responsible for the establishment of peace, and it will have to work toward the enforcement of the resolutions that spell out the components of peace, no matter how hard the aggressors seek to manipulate words, falsify history, and underestimate the minds of people throughout the world.

For our part, our stand is clear and public. We want peace and we are working for it on the lines of international legitimacy, which is represented by UN resolutions endorsed by the international community, and we will neither give up our rights nor bargain them away.

The Palestinian people's intifadah is an integral part of the Arab people's struggle against Israeli aggression. It is

now past its third year and is still going strong. We are giving all support we can to the intifadah just as we back the struggle of our people in occupied Syrian land and the struggle of our brothers in occupied southern Lebanon.

Brother President: It is a source of pleasure to me that our meeting is taking place as sisterly Lebanon is moving steadily along the road of national reconciliation, its legitimate government deploying throughout the country and making continuous efforts that enjoy our support in the cause of liberating the south of the country from Israeli occupation. We have emphasized to our brothers in Lebanon that Syria will support everything that may contribute to the complete return of normalcy to the country under its own authority and constitutional institutions and to the aim of the liberating of Lebanese territory from Israeli occupation.

Brother President: I have every confidence that your visit and the talks we will have will cement the bonds between our two countries and reinforce the positions of Syria and Iran in defending the causes of freedom, right, and justice in our region and the world.

Once again you are most welcome, and please accept my best wishes for health and happiness. I invite the audience to share my greetings to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. And may God's peace and mercy be upon you.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani delivered a speech. The text of the speech follows:

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, esteemed audience:

I am pleased to be visiting fraternal and friendly Syria. In fact, I do not feel a stranger in this beautiful country, which is hospitable to its guests. The moral and firm relations between the two Muslim peoples and the strong ties between your excellency and officials in Syria on the one hand and officials in the Islamic Republic of Iran on the other are among the major factors that give me this pleasure. The deep-rooted relations between the two countries were renewed after the outbreak of the Islamic revolution. These relations and contacts do not spring only from joint cooperation, but also from the two countries' common views on regional and international issues. The necessity and importance of protecting these ties and relations and to promote them further become clearer in the course of time.

Mr. President, after enduring the disasters and tragedies of the imposed war that lasted eight years, the Islamic Republic of Iran had emerged with its head high from these tragedies, relying on Islam and the power of faith and benevolence. It is currently taking fast steps in the field of reconstruction by implementing the Five-Year Plan.

We are pleased to see that, despite problems and conspiracies hatched by world Zionism against your country, Syria, under Your Excellency's leadership, is progressing and making successful achievements. Both your country and ours are located in an important region. In light of the great importance and sensitivity of this region, our two countries must have joint interests and views. We will not forget the close cooperation and Syria's help during the war, which was imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran and its attempts to prevent that war from becoming a national one. This honorable Syrian position springs from the principled positions that Syria adopts in defense of right and justice, and which are always appreciated by wise and free men. Very important events have taken place or might take place in the region, which should urge all of us and the rest of the Islamic states in the region to be very vigilant.

The state of the Iraqi Muslim people causes us worry and great pain. Those people have no refuge after suffering many calamities as a result of the war and the great loss in life and money. They have been afflicted by destruction, damage, annihilation, and bloodshed at the hands of their rulers. Millions of displaced Iraqis have headed for the Islamic Republic of Iran and the countries neighboring Iraq in search of refuge. The Islamic Republic of Iran hosts more than 1 million of those people who have no refuge, including many Kurds. In desperation, hundreds of thousands of people walk on foot across the rugged mountains and valleys to seek refuge in Iran.

Out of the Islamic and humanitarian principles on which it is founded, and despite the many problems resulting from the eight-year imposed war and natural disasters, the Islamic Republic of Iran rushed to help those oppressed people with all available resources. The magnitude of the disaster, however, is so great that Iran cannot deal with the disaster on its own. This makes it necessary for international organizations and other countries in the world to send resources to alleviate the pain of the people who have no refuge. The aid that has been sent so far to the displaced people is insufficient compared to what is needed.

The Islamic Republic of Iran stresses the need to preserve the unity of all Iraqi territory and to prevent the annihilation and displacement of the unarmed people. Iran hopes that security and stability will prevail in that country very soon and that the demands of the people are taken into consideration.

The security of the Persian Gulf region must be provided by the regional states. We declare our readiness to cooperate sincerely with the states in the region to maintain security in agreement and harmony with the interests of the Islamic states. We believe that the plans submitted by the foreigners, which do not serve the real and just interests of the Islamic states in the region, are useless and cannot be implemented.

Mr. President: Despite the ugliest forms of oppression practiced by the usurper Zionist entity, the Palestinian Muslim people in the occupied Palestinian territories are

still making the most splendid epics of resistance and steadfastness without any weapons against the unjust occupiers. They rely on faith. Despite the tricks being hatched to divert the Palestinian Muslim people's intifadah and bring about their surrender, the intifadah will continue until its noble objectives are achieved. The Islamic Republic of Iran will support with all its strength those who fight for freedom and the achievement of the Palestinian people's rights.

The unjust and usurper Zionist entity and its protectors are the principal cause of instability and tension in the region. One ill-omened plot being quickly and quietly concocted, because of the Islamic states' preoccupation with the Persian Gulf crisis, is the immigration of Jews to occupied Palestine. This immigration has broad dimensions that will leave bad political and social signs in the region.

In view of this, all Islamic states and those that defend right and justice in the world should confront and resist this ill-omened and serious phenomenon.

Another feature of the Zionist entity's aggressions and crimes can be seen in Lebanon. The Muslims living there are being exposed to bestial campaigns by the Zionist entity and its agents as a result of which they are killed or wounded and their houses and places are destroyed. Moreover, a large part of Lebanese territory is under the yoke of the usurper Israeli occupation.

We hope that the proud Lebanese people will put aside the old sectarian methods that were inherited from the colonialist era, and depend on God and on their creative power, alertness, and shrewdness, and on the opinions and demands of the majority of the Lebanese people, so that a unified and strong Lebanon can play its role toward attaining its rights and struggling against oppression, injustice, and Zionism together with the rest of the Islamic states.

It is essential here to appreciate the firm and valuable role your country played in confronting the Zionist enemy and I wish the great Syrian people success in this struggle.

Finally, I wish Your Excellency continued good health and happiness while leading the proud and dear Syrian people toward the realization of your country's rights and the attainment of further progress and prosperity, hoping that the ties of friendship between our two countries will be developed toward serving the interests of the two Muslim peoples and further spreading justice, security, and stability in the region and the world.

Peace be upon you.

Regional Issues, Ties Viewed

LD2804153491 Tehran IRNA in English 1326 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 28, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and President Hafiz al-Asad discussed Tehran-Damascus ties, regional issues and other matters of mutual interest in their first round of talks here Sunday.

President al-Asad said at the meeting that the two countries shared common views on various political and international issues "especially after Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait".

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani said in response that Iran and Syria could play a key and determining roles in any future developments in the region, noting "reciprocal trust between the two countries can be a good basis for more serious and deeper cooperation." The two presidents also reiterated their intention to rescue the Iraqi people and preserve Iraq's territorial integrity.

The Iranian delegation present at the meeting consisted of Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velatyati, Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, Minister of Commerce 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji and some Majlis deputies. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his entourage, who arrived here Saturday on a three day state visit, are to leave Damascus for Ankara Monday [29 April].

President Visits Shrine

JN2804112991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] At 1030 today, President Hafiz al-Asad and Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, resumed their talks at an expanded meeting.

Attending for the Syrian side were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Dr. Matanyus Habib, minister of oil and mineral resources; and Ahmad al-Hasan, ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Tehran.

Attending for the Iranian side were Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister; Dr. 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji, commerce minister; Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'I, petroleum minister; Mohammad Mir-Mohammadi, director of the President of the Republic's office; Hojjat el-Eslam Dr. Hasan Ruhani, secretary of the Higher Council of National Security; Hojjat el-Eslam Mahmud Doai, member of the Islamic Majles; Said Rajai-Khorasani, head of the foreign committee of the Majles;

Mohammad Hasan Akhtari, Iran's ambassador in Damascus; Khonsari, director general at the Foreign Ministry; Ahmad Muhammadi, adviser to the Foreign Minister; and Mahmud Hashemi, head of the Political Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Following the expanded meeting, the two presidents resumed their talks in a closed meeting they held at the Presidential Office at 1230 today.

Hojjat el-Eslam President Hashemi-Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and his delegation, accompanied by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', head of the honorary mission, this morning paid a visit to the al-Sayyidah Zaynab Shrine.

On arrival at the Shrine, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his delegation were received by Ghassan Jirudi, assistant of the awqaf minister; and Rida Murtada, custodian of the al-Sayyidah Zaynab Shrine.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his delegation performed prayers at the mosque of al-Sayyidah Zaynab Shrine and walked around the mosque, seeking her blessings.

Concluding the visit, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Mr. Murtada exchanged cordial speeches and gifts. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani wrote in the visitors' book: I have visited the Shrine of al-Sayyidah Zaynab, may God's peace be upon her, and seen the project under way to expand the shrine. I wish success to those carrying out the project.

Afterwards, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his delegation left the al-Sayyidah Zaynab Shrine with the same cordiality and hospitality with which they were received.

'Closed Meeting' Held

JN2804160891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, resumed their talks in an expanded meeting at 1030 today.

Attending for the Syrian side were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Dr. Matanyus Habib, minister of oil and mineral resources; and Ahmad al-Hasan, ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Tehran.

Attending on the Iranian side were Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister; Dr. 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji, commerce minister; Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, petroleum minister; Mohammad Mir-Mohammadi, director of the president of the Republic's office; Hojjat el-Eslam Dr. Hasan Ruhani, secretary of the Higher Council of National Security; Hojjat el-Eslam Mahmud Doai, member of the Islamic Majles; Said Rajai-Khorasani, head of the foreign committee of the Majles; Mohammad Hasan Akhtari, Iran's ambassador in Damascus; Khonsari, director general at the Foreign Ministry; Ahmad Muhammadi, adviser to the Foreign Minister; and Mahmud Hashemi, head of the Political Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Following the expanded meeting, the two presidents resumed talks in a closed meeting at the Presidential Office at 1230 today.

They discussed in detail the situation in the region and the consequences resulting from the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the Gulf war and their impact on the region as a whole. They also reviewed developments in Lebanon in light of the efforts to implement the national reconciliation document and what Syria is offering to the Lebanese brothers in this regard.

The president explained Syria's efforts on all levels to ensure respect for international legitimacy in the region, including the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory, as well as the UN resolutions pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The talks also dealt with the cooperation in all fields and means to promote and bolster it. Viewpoints were in agreement on the issues discussed.

Leaders Comment on Talks

LD2804173791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The first round of official talks between the high-ranking delegations of Iran and Syria headed by the presidents of the two countries took place in Damascus this morning. Our correspondent reports from Damascus:

[Correspondent] On the second day of the visit to Damascus by the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the official high-ranking delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab Republic of Syria, headed by Presidents Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Hafiz al-Asad respectively, held their first round of official talks. After this meeting a spokesman for the Iranian delegation said: The atmosphere of this meeting was friendly. During this meeting, issues and developments concerning the region, the specific circumstances of Iran, the situation in Lebanon and Palestine, and bilateral relations were discussed. Emphasis was placed on the continuation of cooperation and exchanges of view between the officials of the two countries. The spokesman added that in the discussions on the question of Iraq, the presidents of the two countries stressed: Our objective is the salvation of the people of Iraq and the preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of that country.

At the talks, President al-Asad stated that Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's first visit abroad since becoming president

is taking place at a sensitive time. Expressing satisfaction with the talks on bilateral relations conducted by the two countries' highest-ranking officials, he said: The two countries shared the same viewpoints about many political and regional issues—especially before and after the invasion of Kuwait—and still do so.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said at the same meeting: Our visit to Syria is taking place at a time when important developments are taking shape in the region and in the world. Syria and Iran can play a fundamental role in the shaping of future events.

Meets Lebanon's Fadlallah

LD2904085191 Tehran IRNA in English 0723 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 29, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani of Iran Sunday appealed to world Muslims, the Islamic forces in Lebanon in particular, to unite and counter the Zionist regime.

The president who arrived here Saturday heading a high-ranking delegation at the invitation of his Syrian counterpart Hafiz al-Asad, made the remark in a meeting with prominent Lebanese theologian al-'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah.

Later, the president received members of the Central Council of Lebanese Hizballah and was briefed by Council's Secretary-General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli on the current developments in Lebanon and the region.

Expressing satisfaction with the existing unity among Lebanese Muslims, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani underscored further unity in an all-out campaign against the Zionist regime.

In a meeting with the staff of Iranian organizations here the same day, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani lauded Syria's political stand and supported it.

On developments in Kuwait and Iraq, he said they were aimed at other goals among them Lebanon and Palestine.

He ruled out claims that dissolution of the ruling Iraqi Ba'thist Party was the objective behind the developments and said the Baghdad regime has served the U.S. interests in the region and has even supplied Michel 'Awn and Samir Ja'Ja' in Lebanon with military and financial aid. He described the Iraqi imposed war on Iran as one of the greatest services of the Ba'th Party to the U.S.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani who is to depart for Turkey Monday on a four-day official visit, emphasized unity of the Islamic and national forces in Lebanon and Palestine in foiling plots of foreign powers.

Stressing sensitivity of the current developments in the region, he lauded Syria's stand and said the Islamic republic will remain on the side of Damascus and will cooperate with it on major issues.

Criticizing stand of the Iraqi Ba'th Party on regional issues, he said that it has never worked for the cause of Islam and people and has never supported the issue of Palestine.

Meets Lebanese, Palestinians

LD2804194991 Tehran IRNA in English 1838 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 28, IRNA—Iran's President Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Sunday afternoon separately received leader of the Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon Walid Junblatt and a group of Druze ulema of Lebanon.

President Rafsanjani emphasized the need for the unity of Muslim forces in Lebanon against the illegal Zionist entity.

Later he also had separate meetings with delegations from the ulema of Jabal Amel (in South Lebanon), al-Biqa' Valley of Lebanon, and the Association of Muslim Ulema of Lebanon at the Iranian Embassy in Damascus.

The Iranian president on Sunday afternoon also received secretary general of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine Ahmad Jibril and members of the Command Council of the Front.

Supports Palestinian Intifadah

LD2804222191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Mr. Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, was received by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Sunday at the Islamic Republic of Iran Embassy in Damascus. Mr. Jibril was accompanied by members of the Command Council of that Front. At this meeting he briefed Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani about the state of the uprising of the Palestinian Muslims—intifadah.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then emphasized the Islamic Republic of Iran's comprehensive support for the uprising of the Palestinians. He also stressed the need for relentless struggle until the full rights of the Muslim people of Palestine are restored.

Talks Resumed in Damascus

JN2804203491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad tonight visited Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi- Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, at his place of residence at Tishrin Palace.

During this meeting, the two presidents resumed discussion of the topics discussed during previous meetings.

'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, vice president; Faruq al-Shar', minister of foreign affairs; 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Iranian foreign minister; and Dr. Hasan Ruhani, secretary of the Higher Council of National Security in Iran, attended the meeting.

Meets Iranian Embassy Staff

NC2904054491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani met with the staff at the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy and institutions in Damascus last night and discussed the regional situation. Pointing to Lebanon's and Syria's significance to the future of the Islamic ummah, he said: The incidents that have taken place in the Persian Gulf are directed toward certain ends, and we must remain alert so that arrogance does not achieve its objectives.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani clarified: The Lebanese resistance and the Islamic and national forces in Lebanon should unite and coordinate their activities. Referring to occupied Palestine, the president said: All forces should unite in the occupied territories too and remain alert to any suspicious developments.

Expressing satisfaction over his talks with Syrian officials, the president added: I believe that in view of its responsibility and position in the region, the Syrian Government knows what it is doing. For this reason, we should stand beside Syria.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also discussed the nature of Iraq's Ba'th Party and the role that this party has played against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Palestinians, and the Iraqi people. He expressed the hope that Iraqi Muslims open up a new path themselves.

Final Round of Talks Held

JN2904101891 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0910 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Damascus, 29 Apr (SANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad and Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, resumed their talks at a final session they held at 1000 today at the Presidential Palace. [passage omitted]

During this session, the two presidents completed discussion of the topics they discussed in the previous sessions. They reviewed the results of their earlier talks, which emphasize that their views coincide on the various issues.

News Conference Held

JN2904145391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1415 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] At the conclusion of their talks, President Hafiz al-Asad and Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, spoke to mass media representatives. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said his visit to Syria was full of good and successful results useful for us and our region. He said: In our discussions, we touched on the current situation in the Gulf region, as well as the current situation in Iraq. He said: We exchanged valuable views on the Palestine question and reached clear conceptions. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Discussions also dealt with the Lebanese issue and issues of other countries related to this region. He said conceptions were in agreement.

President Hafiz al-Asad said: The existing bilateral relations of confidence have always been able to render all our meetings or talks successful. The president declared: Both of us confirmed our backing of the Palestinian people's rights and support for the Palestinian people to enable them to regain their legitimate rights. We discussed the situation in Lebanon. We had the same view. Both of us support Lebanon and the reforms that took place and that are taking place.

His excellency said: Naturally, we have discussed the crisis in the Gulf with its past, present, and future dimensions. He added: Both of us were pained and continue to feel pained about the losses there. In the final analysis, Syria and Iran consider these losses to be like their own. The president said: We are now following events in Iraq closely and we strongly advocate the territorial integrity of Iraq.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani left Damascus at 1515 today following a cordial and official visit of three days to the Syrian Arab Republic at the invitation of President Hafiz al-Asad. Heading those at hand to bid him farewell at Damascus International Airport was President Hafiz al-Asad.

Afghanistan

Armed Forces Liberate Lowgar Province Region

LD2504164491 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 91

[Text] Following theoric mopping-up operations, the courageous units and subunits of the Armed Forces stationed in Lowgar Province have liberated all regions in (?Tangi Wakhjan) and the surrounding areas. They also captured the headquarters of (?Esar) troops and subunits located in (?Tangi Wakhjan) region, Lowgar Province, belonging to Gulbuddin's so-called Hezb-e Islami Party.

Military Operations Continue

LD2604173891 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Excerpt] The units and subunits of the armed forces who liberated (Tangi Waghjan) and its surroundings regions by defeating the so-called Esar army of the extremist Gulbuddin group, Sayyaf-e Wahhabi group, and Pakistani mercenary Wahhabis and militarists, continued their military operation this afternoon in these regions.

The Bakhtar military section reports that as a result of these activities, seven armored vehicles, four motor vehicles, three artillery pieces, one ZK-1, two rocket launchers, one mortar, three DShks, nine Kalashnikovs, one communication set, 100 artillery shells, 50 Sakr-type surface-to-surface missiles, 550 rockets, 180 boxes of DShk ammunition, 50 boxes of ammunition for Kalashnikovs, 200 mortars, 150 boxes of ammunition for heavy machineguns, 50 boxes of ammunition for air defense weapons, 10 antitank mines, 100 antipersonnel mines, six pairs of binoculars, one [word indistinct] binocular, seven ammunition depots, and four foodstuff depots left behind by the fleeing extremists were seized.

The report adds that since the begining of combat operation on 22 April until yesterday, dozens of armored and other vehicles, dozens of heavy weapons, hundreds of light weapons and tens of thousands of rounds of ammunition for light and heavy weapons belonging to the extremists were destroyed. Several armored and other vehicles, dozens of heavy weapons, including BM-12 sets, artillery, rocket launchers, DShks, ZK-1, hundreds of light weapons, and ammunition for light and heavy weapons has fallen into the hands of the brave personnel of the armed forces, those earnest defenders of the homeland and people. [passage omitted]

Army Commander Details Operations

LD2604204191 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Speech by General Muhammad Nabi Azimi, Afghan first deputy defense minister, general commander of Kabul garrison, and administrator of operations in Lowgar Province on 25 April; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] First of all, I want to convey my congratulations and that of the units and companies included in the combat operation on Lowgar to all the dear compatriots, to the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, headed by Najibullah the supreme commander of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, on the successful accomplishment of the combat operations carried out in some areas of Lowgar Province, including (Tangi Waghjan).

It should be said that the combat operations began on 22 April in the region of Muhammad Agha and (Tangi Waghjan) on the instruction of the esteemed supreme commander of the Armed Forces. The combat operation was planned to be accomplished within 48 hours. Within 48 hours the units and companies included in the combat operation carried out their duties successfully. At first the enemy, possessing heavy weapons and vehicles such as surface-to-surface missiles, heavy machineguns, various tanks and weapons, obstinately defended the front line. All the height, [word indistinct] controling (Tangi Waghjan) and villages and localities located in the direction of (Tangi Waghjan) were in the hands of the opposition. A regiment of the Esar Army was deployed in that direction by Hezb-e Eslami, which was disrupting the peaceful life and tranquillity of the noble and Muslim people of Lowgar Province.

The Armed Forces Supreme Command of the Republic of Afghanistan commissioned the units and companies of the Armed Forces to eliminate and crush the Esar Army in (Tangi Waghjan), and the (Tangi Waghjan) and Kabul-Lowgar road to be opened to the public within 48 hours in accordance with the plan.

The administrator of the combat operation organized and prepared an orderly combat operation plan. By deploying the units and companies of the Armed Forces and creating accurate joint and comprehensive efforts among the various forces—the joint efforts of rocket, artillery, and air forces—he was able to deal crushing blows on the frontline defenses of the opposition on the first day of combat operations, and then to destroy the frontline defenses of the enemy and to capture it. The enemy defense line included the residential areas of (Moghol Khel), (Lashkar-e Khel), Divalak, and its right and left heights. On the night of 22 and 23 April, the resistance was broken in the right and left directions of the villages and these heights were seized by the units included in the combat operation of Lowgar front. On 23 April the combat operation developed successfully. The villages of (Moghol Khel), (Lashkar-e Khel), and later the villages of Deh Now and (Tangi Waghjan) were captured by the units and companies of the Afghan armed forces.

On the night of 24-25 April, operations began to cut the enemy's second defense line, which included the heights on the left and right of (Tangi Waghjan). As a result of

crushing blows by the air, rocket, and artillery forces, the enemy resistance was broken in this line, too. On 24 April [as heard] a number of these heights were seized by our forces.

Today, 25 April, the units captured the last target, that is to occupy the headquarters of the Esar Army, and also captured Kolangar district, the village of Niazi, the region of Qanjegh 'Ali, which is known as Qanjegh 'Ali hospital, because a hospital was located in that area. All were captured by the Republic of Afghanistan armed forces. It is not possible at the moment to inform you about the casualties and damage inflicted on the enemy. Reports will be gathered and presented to the dear compatriots in future interviews. [passage omitted]

The operation was carried out successfully, in accordance with the plan, and on time. In this combat operation the direct interference of Pakistan's military forces can be proved to our dear compatriots and the whole world through the capture of two Pakistani prisoners, and by four Pakistani corpses and several Wahhabi corpses. This proves the direct involvement of Pakistan in this combat operation and interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, such as we have also seen in Khowst.

According to reports which have reached us, dozens of Pakistani advisers, Pakistani militarists, and Army officers have directly participated in this combat operation. Also, Arab Wahhabi experts and advisers were directly involved in the operation. They were crushed and eliminated as a result of crushing blows by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

Regime Launches Air Strikes

BK2704091491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0903 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, April 27 (AFP)—Afghan Government forces have launched a series of attacks, including air strikes, on guerrilla-held areas south of Kabul, claiming numerous victims, mujahidin sources said here Saturday.

The attacks were aimed at causing confusion among the mujahidin, who are preparing several offensives against the Soviet-backed government in Kabul, Amin Wardek, a spokesman for resistance commanders here, said.

Intensive bombing has been going on "day and night," particularly in Lowgar Province around the towns of Gardez and Ghazni and along the road from Kabul to Qandahar, he said.

Some eight people had been killed in Moqor, 250 kilometres (150 miles) southwest of the capital, Mr. Wardek said, adding that the mujahidin had suffered a reversal in Lowgar Province after a large government operation there.

The Kabul news agency BAKHTAR, monitored here Saturday, said a large quantity of arms and munitions had been seized during the operation and that Defense Minister Aslam Watanjar had visited the "Lowgar front."

The government offensive comes almost a month after the mujahidin captured the eastern garrison town of Khowst near the border with Pakistan.

Afghan President Najibullah said Wednesday, "if the extremists force us and our people to leave their homes and seek refuge, then we are entitled to exercise our legitimate right to defend ourselves."

The Afghan president's comment was interpreted as a claim of responsibility for the Scud missile attack last week on the mujahidin-controlled eastern border town of Asadabad in Kunar Province that left 300 dead.

Forces 'Defenders of Independence'

LD2804051691 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Kabul, Apr 27, BAKHTAR—The contingents and detachments of the Republic of Afghanistan [RA] Armed Forces by occupying Tange "Valley" Waghjan from the Aisar forces of the Gulbuddin and Sayaf Wahabi extremists groupings on Apr 25, 1991 as well as environs of that place, have killed 400 rpt 400 extremists and injured 500 rpt 500 others, reports a BAKHTAR military correspondent.

The government Armed Forces have continued their operations on Apr 6, 1991 as well during which tens of Pakistani militarists and Saudi Wahabis corpses were discovered and out of tens of arms depots discovered during the operations seven were evacuated.

During the operations, the report adds, 40 rpt 40 arms depots ten armour vehicles including tanks and armour-plated, hundreds of heavy machineguns, mortars, rocket launchers, ground to ground Sacker-type rockets, cannons, wireless sets and millions of various kinds of bullets were seized during the 48 rpt 48 hrs operations. The area was under the war-mongers control in the past ten years. After the operations all strongholds, gathering spots, fortifications and centres of the opposition were occupied.

Full General Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, RA defence minister has also visited the area on Apr 25, 1991 and called on new security posts set up there following its occupation.

On Apr 6, 1991 foreign and local journalists visited the Tange Waghjan area and participated in a press conference held there. Full General Mohammad Nabi Azimi, first defence minister talked on the successes achieved by the RA Armed Forces in Lowgar Province and replied to the questions raised by journalists in relation to the RA Armed Forces successes in Tange Waghjan region of Lowgar Province, 70 km south of Kabul.

The journalists then visited strongholds, centres and positions as [words indistinct] and ammunition depots and headquarters of Nisar attached to Gulbuddin groupings.

The journalists during their visits from depots were apprised by Gen Abdul Rashid Dostum commander of the Jauzjan infantry forces.

The freeing of Tanga Waghjan as well as its environs in less then 48 hours and scattering of Nisar forces and Sayaf Wahabi groupings acted under the leadership of Pakistani militarists and Saudi Wahabis, has once again assured our people that the RA Armed Forces are the real defenders of independence, territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the country.

Besides, an extensive gathering of the elders, clerics and tribal cheiftains of the Lowgar Province was held in Puli-Alam, centre of the province, on Apr 26, 1991.

During the session, following recitation of some verse of the Holy Koran, Full Gen. M.M. Azimi, general commander of Kabul Garrison, Col. Gen Amamuddin, deputy defence minister, Gen A. Dostum Jauzjan, infantry forces commander, during their speeches shed light on the activities and successes of the Armed Forces in and around Tanga Waghjan.

Then a number of social figures of the province while appreciating the sacrifices and bravery of the Armed Forces in freeing Tanga Waghjan experessed their all-sided support for implementation of state constructive proposals, national reconciliation policy as well as ensurance of peace and calm in Lowgar Province.

Heavy Fighting Reported

BK2804100091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0955 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, April 28 (AFP)—Afghan Government forces kept up attacks Sunday against guerrilla units along a key highway south of Kabul in heavy fighting claiming hundreds of casualities, resistance sources here said.

Kabul forces, backed up by air strikes, battled resistance forces along a highway in Lowgar Province some 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of Kabul, the resistance said.

Official sources on both sides claimed their forces killed and wounded hundreds of their opponents but no precise figure could be independently confirmed.

The mujahidin have acknowledged suffering losses in recent days in Lowgar's Wagjhan region, which is largely controlled by the fundamentalist Hezb-E-Islami group headed by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

Resistance forces meanwhile fired artillery rounds and rockets into government positions around the town of Gardez, further to the south. Since taking the town of Khowst nearly a month ago, the resistance have set their sights on seizing Gardez.

The mujahidin are funded by the United States and Saudi Arabia and receive weapons via Pakistan.

Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan Sunday reaffirmed in a press conference that Islamabad favored a "political solution" to the Afghan conflict. But he said Afghan President Najibullah did not have the support of all the Afghan people.

Mujahidin Capture Three Posts

BK2704113091 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin are reported to have captured three Kabul regime security posts during their advance toward Gardeyz, headquarters of Paktia Province. Mujahidin hit the security posts 12 km northeast of Gardeyz with rockets and missiles after which the Kabul forces fled away without any resistance. Mujahidin sources say the Kabul regime forces have been launching attacks including air strikes on mujahidin-held areas, particularly in Lowgar Province, around the towns of Gardeyz and Ghazni and along the roads from Kabul to Qandahar.

Extremists Fire Missiles on Kabul 27 Apr

LD2704170991 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] The extremists—enemies of the homeland—fired a number of missiles and martyred nine Kabul citizens and injured another 45 people today.

The correspondents of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY's [BIA] military section reported that the missiles fired today were Sakr-type and cluster-type which were put at the disposal of the extremists by Pakistani militarists against all international norms and treaties. The missiles are for massacre and for soiling with blood our innocent compatriots, while at the same time our noble people take steps for peace and reconciliation and ask for the restoration of nationwide peace and an end to war and fratricide. As a result of these missiles, houses are being demolished, innocent people soiled with blood and burnt in the fire of gunpowder.

The BIA military section correspondent adds that the surviving families—whose beloved ones were martyred or injured today as a result of this criminal action by the warmongering extremists, in seeing the blood and pieces of limbs, expressed their profound hatred and repulsion against the perpetrators of this crime by shouting and crying. They asked Almighty God to punish these barbarous criminals for their evil deeds. They have no other duty but the massacre and shedding of blood of our innocent Muslim people.

Among the 23 missiles which were fired at the residential regions, two of them hit the vicinity of Agriculture Faculty and vicinity of Habibia Lycee, which disrupted

learning science and knowledge studies. Their hatred against the extremists was again aroused because of this tragic and shocking deed.

Those injured as a result of this mishap were quickly transferred to hospitals by security forces personnel. A number of them were released after treatment. Material losses were also inflicted on our compatriots by this missile fire.

Regime Continues 'Indiscriminate Bombing'

BK2804153491 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say Kabul regime forces are continuing indiscriminate bombing in eastern Paktia and Nangarhar Provinces, causing heavy material losses and destruction to homes. Many have been wounded and are leaving their homes.

Another report says there have been continuing air strikes on Khowst City since it fell to the mujahidin last month.

Further 'Aggressive' Pakistani Actions Protested

LD2604165191 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1130 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] The charge d'affaires of the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul was summoned this afternoon to the Foreign Ministry and the following strong protest of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan was handed over to him by the director of the First Political Department of this ministry:

As the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has announced time and again, the militarist circles of Pakistan shamelessly embark on interference and aggression against the Muslim people and national sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has presented in a timely fashion to the world's public incontestable documentary evidence concerning direct and open interference and aggression by the militarists of Pakistan on the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan.

The militarists of Pakistan not only equip, arm, and train the armed Afghan extremists to continue the war and bloodshed in Afghanistan, but dispatch to the Republic of Afghanistan their spies and armed men to massacre and destroy Afghanistan. For example during the mopping up operation carried out on 2 Sawr 1370 [22 April 1991] in the surroundings of Lowgar Province by the armed forces two armed Pakistani men, Tabish Siddiqi, son of Abdul Odud, and Estiyaq Ahmad, son of Mushtaq Ahmad—both were residents of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, equipped with a rocket launcher and automatic machine gun—were arrested while engaged in subversive action. They have already admitted their crime.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan strongly protests against such aggressive actions by the militarists of Pakistan which are contrary to all principles and accepted norms of international relations as well as contrary to the provisions of the Geneva accords. The Government of Afghanistan asks the responsible authorities of Pakistan to refrain from such aggressions in the future. Otherwise the responsibility for the dangerous consequences stemming from the repetition of such aggressions will rest on the Government of Pakistan.

India

Paramilitary Forces Dispatched for Elections

BK2604161491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] The center is dispatching 640 companies of paramilitary forces to the states and identified 300 sensitive constituencies to ensure peaceful poll and prevent electoral malpractices. The union home secretary, Mr. Raj Bhargav, told newsmen in New Delhi today that the forces will be in addition to the existing deployment in various parts of the country and also the 15-lakh-strong state police personnel. The companies belonging to the CRPF, BSF, CISF [Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force, Central Industrial Security Force], the Railway Protection Force, and the Assam Rifles have already started moving out and will reach their respective states in full strength by the 10th of next month. He said these will operate as strike forces to counter communal, caste and extremist violence which are apprehended. The state governments have been asked to coordinate with local Army commanders so that troops can be called out at short notice in an emergency. A central control room has started working round the clock in Delhi to be in touch with the states.

The home secretary disclosed that most of the sensitive constituencies are from Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Seventy to 80 constituencies have been identified as extrasensitive. He said the current level of force deployment in Assam, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir has not been disturbed for election work elsewhere.

The union minister of state for home, Mr. Subodh Kant, has expressed his satisfaction with the poll and security arrangements being made in Punjab. Speaking to newsmen in Chandigarh this evening after his two-day visit to the union territory and Punjab, he said fencing and lighting of the border in Punjab will be completed by next month much before the poll.

Shekhar Urges: Rethink Punjab Poll Boycott

BK2604162791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] The prime minister has urged the political parties which have decided not to take part in Punjab elections

to reconsider their decision. He was addressing a delegation of Delhi Sri Guru Singh Sabha [Sikh religious organization] at his residence in New Delhi.

In Punjab, 421 candidates have filed their nominations for 13 parliamentary seats. The position of candidates in the various assembly constituencies is not yet clear. However, according to the information available with the election office in Chandigarh, over 1,500 candidates have filed their nominations in four districts of Ludhiana, Patiala, Jullundur, and Kapurthala.

Assam's ULFA Not To Join Coming Elections

BK2804034691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The United Liberation Front of Assam [ULFA] has announced that it will not take part in the coming elections in Assam. The spokesman of the front, Mr. Siddharth Phukan, said in a statement in Guwahati that the ULFA has no candidate in the field nor has it a secret sympathy for anyone.

Punjab Election Candidate Shot Dead

BK2804041891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, a former minister, Mr. Malket Singh Sidhu, and his body guard were shot dead by some unidentified persons near his residence in Moga yesterday evening. According to official sources, Mr. Sidhu was returning to his house when he was attacked by unspecified number of persons. They assailants managed to escape. Mr. Sidhu had filed nomination papers for the Moga and Bagpurana assembly seats.

Parties Readjust Bihar Lok Sabha Seats

BK2804082291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In Bihar, there has been a complete adjustment of seats between the Janata Dal, CPI [Communist Party of India], CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the Marxist Coordination, and the Jharkhand Mukti Morch for the 54 Lok Sabha seats in the state. Addressing a press conference in Patna today, the state chief minister, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, said that the Janata Dal has left eight seats for CPI, 10 for CPI-M, one for Marxist Coordination, five seats for the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the rest for Janata Dal. The CPI state general secretary, Mr. Suraj Prasad Singh, was present in the press conference.

Heavy Turnout Reported in Local Punjab Elections

BK2804133891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, polling for the three municipal corporations of Amritsar, Jullundhur, and Ludhiana passed off peacefully today, barring a few minor incidents. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that about 70 to 75 percent [of] votes were polled in Jullundhur. In Amritsar, 65 percent [of] voters exercised their franchise. Reports of the poll percentage in Ludhiana are awaited. Counting of votes began immediately after the polling was over. The results are expected by late tonight.

The Congress-I, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], CPI [Communist Party of India], CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], BSP [Bahuguna Samaj Party], Janata Dal, Janata Party, and Congress-S have fielded 482 candidates, while 816 independents are in the fray. There are 143 seats in the three corporations. This is the first time polling is taking place for the corporations since their inception in 1977.

Formation of New Party Announced

BK2804134091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, Captain Amrinder Singh has floated a new party called Shiromani Akali Dal-Panthic. Announcing this in Patiala today, he said All India Sikh Students Federation-Manjit Group has agreed to leave 16 [state assembly] seats for his party.

BJP, Congress-I Win

BK2904100891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has emerged as the single largest party in the municipal corporations of Amritsar and Ludhiana, while the Congress-I has secured maximum number of seats in Jullundhur.

According to the secretary, Local Self Government, Mr. S.K. Nayak, in the 50-member Amritsar Municipal Corporation, 17 seats have gone to the BJP, 15 to the Congress-I, three to the CPI [Communist Party of India], one to Janata Dal, and 14 to independents.

In Ludhiana, in the 50-member corporation, 46 results have so far been declared, of which 16 hav e gone in favor of the BJP, 13 to Congress-I, one to BSP [Bahujana Samaj Party], and 16 to independents. Repolling has been ordered in two wards, while recounting of votes is continuing in two wards.

In the 43-member Jullundhur municipal corporation, the Congress-I has bagged 15 seats, the BJP 13, BSP three, and 12 have gone in favor of independents.

Border With Nepal Closes Ahead of Polls

BK2904033691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] A UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] report quoting official sources says the Indo-Nepal border will be closed in view of the general elections in both the countries next month. The decision was taken at a high level meeting between the representatives of the two countries.

Army Suspends Operations in Assam

BK2904035891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] The Assam governor has reiterated that all Army operations in the state have been suspended. An official spokesman in Guwahati denied a report in the local press that the army is continuing operations. He said the overall law and order situation has remained peaceful.

Council Criticizes 'Retrograde' U.S. Trade Action

BK2804091791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The Indo-US joint business council has described the US action of placing India on special 301 trade hit list as a retrograde step which will adversely affect trade ties between the two countries. The chairman of the India's section of the council, Mr. H.K. Singhlania, said in New Delhi that such an action is uncalled for and counterproductive.

CPI-M Critical of U.S.

BK2804131791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has criticized the American Government's decision to place India on its special 301 list for alleged violation of intellectual property rights. In a statement in New Delhi, the party said the action reveals the pressure the United states continues to mount on developing countries like India to make them dependent on what it called imperialist finance capital.

Minister Cautions Against 'Overreaction'

BK2804150491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The commerce minister, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, has expressed the view that the differences between India and the United states over India's inclusion in the special 301 trade list can be resolved through negotiations. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi today, he cautioned against overreaction. He said the statement of the U.S. trade representative, Miss Carla Hills, is conciliatory and leaves the doors open for negotiations. He said New Delhi expects to continue the negotiations to make the United States recognize our viewpoint and to find out the extent to which we can accommodate their needs. Dr. Swamy said India would like a solution which is uniform for the developing countries and is not under pressure and monopolistic in nature.

The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] says that Washington is once again placed India on its trade list by taking advantage of the weakness of the Indian Government in the last few years. In a statement issued in New Delhi today, the BJP vice president, Mr. K.R. Malkani, criticized the United States for what he said [were] strong-arm tactics. He said we must uphold the economic integrity and sovereignty of the country in negotiations with the United States on the issue. India should also consult China and Thailand, which have also also been placed under the special 301 provisions.

Bomb Explodes in Delhi Shopping Complex

BK2604145091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] At least one person was killed and a few others injured in a bomb blast in Connaught Place area in the capital. The blast took place near a toilet in Palika Bazar complex at about 1900 [1330 GMT] this evening. Three shops and some vehicles have been damaged. The injured have been admitted to a hospital.

3 Killed, 8 Injured in Blast

BK2604160891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Text] Three persons were killed and eight injured, five of them seriously, in a powerful bomb blast in the busy Connaught Place area of the capital this evening. The explosion is stated to have taken place around 1900 in Palika Bazaar. Three shops and some vehicles have also been damaged. The injured have been admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, visited the injured in the hospital.

Iran

President Speaks Prior to Departure for Syria

LD2704125691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Interview with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Mr. President, now that you are departing on an official visit to the Arab Republic of Syria, please tell us about the thrust of the talks you are going to hold and about what you expect the outcome to be.

[Rafsanjani] On the whole, this visit takes place in response to the invitation of Mr. Hafiz al-Asad, and in reply to his visit. Second, we now have many issues to discuss with Syrian officials. There are regional issues, the outcome of the Persian Gulf crisis, particular issues concerning Iraq, refugees, and issues concerning Palestine, as we are currently at a point where we should be alert, and need discussion and consultation. In principle, world affairs require discussion and consultation of the global developments we are witnessing. We think all those issues can be raised in our discussions with the Syrians. Moreover, we have many common affairs, which we should implement jointly.

[Correspondent] Mutual views have always been expressed by Iran and Syria on regional issues. What are

the most important common stances of the two countries, on the threshold of this visit?

[Rafsanjani] We have no particular opposing views. When Mr. Hafiz al-Asad was here, we reached mutual agreement on most cases. At present we cannot say what views are not common. We should first hold discussions to find out if there are issues on which we have differences of opinion. If there are differences, they would be raised later.

[Correspondent] You are to pay a similar visit to Turkey after your trip to Syria. Please tell us about your visit to Turkey and the issues you are going to discuss.

[Rafsanjani] A lot of the issues I referred to can also be discussed in Turkey. Of course, some of them are going to be discussed further in Syria, such as issues concerning Lebanon. In Turkey we have more economic and trade ties to discuss than in Syria. On the whole, there are serious issues to be discussed with both countries. That visit also takes place in response to the visit by the president of Turkey.

[Correspondent] Are there trilateral issues concerning the three countries of Iran, Syria, and Turkey that necessitate such a trip after the visit to Syria?

[Rafsanjani] Yes, there are, because Iraqi issues concern all of us. Refugees concern all of us. Affairs of the region, the security of the region on the whole, concern all of us. There are also particular issues that are going to be raised in each country, but mainly they will be issues of interest in the three countries.

Velayati Comments on Visit to Saudi Arabia

NC2704061291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati returned to Tehran this morning from Saudi Arabia, where he held talks with officials. Interviewed by our correspondent upon his return to Tehran, the foreign minister said that during his talks with Saudi officials, he discussed various topics, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran's views on the hajj ceremony and issues of bilateral cooperation. Regional security problems were also discussed with Saudi Arabia in its capacity as a member of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

[Begin Velayati recording] During our visit, we held talks with the king of Saudi Arabia and that country's foreign minister. The talks centered on bilateral relations, the hajj, and regional cooperation, and views were also exchanged on international issues.

During the several rounds of talks, we held detailed discussions on ways to carry out the hajj ritual in the best way possible and in the way favored by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The esteemed head of the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization and some of his colleagues accompanied our delegation on this trip. They have stayed in Saudi Arabia to follow up on the matter.

On the basis of what we achieved, we hope that this year, God willing, after an interruption of several years in the hajj, we will have a pilgrimage that corresponds to the dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran; that is, an Abrahamic pilgrimage.

As the two leading countries in the Persian Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia have decided to maintain close, strategic, and comprehensive cooperation on ensuring regional security. The basis for this cooperation was established during the five rounds of talks we have had with the Saudi foreign minister. Our talks will continue, and the Saudi foreign minister will visit Iran in the near future.

As we have stated repeatedly, regional cooperation and security cannot take shape without the participation of regional countries, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is something the regional countries have also concluded, and, God willing, we will take practical steps toward this in the future. [end recording]

Commenting on his talks in Saudi Arabia on regional security cooperation, Mr. Velayati said:

[Begin Velayati recording] We consider regional cooperation to be the basis for regional security, and so far the regional countries have not only not disagreed with this, but we believe they are all serious about achieving this. Progress depends on the efforts of all parties involved, however, and, God willing, these efforts will be exerted more seriously in the future. [end recording]

At the end of the interview, the foreign minister clarified: We also placed great emphasis on the topic of the mausoleum [not further identified] with Saudi officials. We were assured that the Saudi Government will work for its necessary reconstruction, and that the way for this has already been paved.

Bani-Sadr Believes Bush Prolonged Hostage Affair

LD2604212391 Paris Antenne-2 Television Network in French 1800 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Carter against Reagan: the business, as you will have understood, is going on in the United States. Following certain rumors, former President Carter is calling for the opening of an inquiry into the release of the hostages at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. Jimmy Carter believes his successor, Ronald Reagan, did everything possible for the release of the hostages to take place after the presidential election. At the center of the debate is reported to be an eyewitness account of great importance, that of former Iranian President Bani-Sadr. Isabelle Baechler explains:

[Baechler] [passage omitted] Things were stormy between Iran and the United States, and the young Islamic revolution was finding its way. Everything took

place against the backdrop of the U.S. election campaign. Ronald Reagan wanted to discredit Jimmy Carter; it appears today that any weapon was considered a good one, including that of the hostages. Candidate Reagan and his men were dealing with the religious leader, Ayatollah Khomeyni; while Jimmy Carter, the president at the time, was dealing with his counterpart, Bani-Sadr—two parallel sets of negotiations for a solution made urgent by the Iran-Iraq war. Tehran needed U.S. weapons, but, surprisingly, in October 1980 the Khomeyni camp put a block on everything.

[Begin Bani-Sadr recording; video shows Bani-Sadr seated in a room—caption reads Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, former president of the Iranian Republic] Two statements were made—by Prime Minister Raja'i and by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the speaker of the parliament—on 22 October, saying that Iran no longer needed U.S. weapons or spare parts. I was quite astonished, because that was why we wanted to resolve the affair of the hostages as soon as possible. But that meant they had finished making an agreement with Mr. Carter's rivals. [passage omitted]

I do not think it was Reagan who organized all that. It is more likely Bush who tried it, because it is the kind of affair, the kind of activity, of operation carried out by the CIA. It is not a former actor's kind of operation. [end recording] [passage omitted]

'Secret Deal' Denied

LD2704103491 Tehran IRNA in English 0836 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 27, IRNA—Behzad Nabavi who was in charge of the Algiers accord during the hostage crisis in 1980 dismissed the allegations made by Gary Sick, a member of President Jimmy Carter's administration and a staff member of the National Security Council (NSC) from August 1976 to April 1981, appeared in the NEW YORK TIMES on April 15.

Gary Sick claimed that Iran made a secret deal with the Reagan-Bush campaign of 1980 election to delay the release of 52 American hostages held in Tehran until after the presidential elections in return for delivery of arms through Israel.

Sick wrote that the deal aimed at preventing Carter from being re-elected and securing Reagan's victory.

The 52 American hostages held by the Iranian Muslim students following the line of Imam Khomeyni for 444 days in the U.S. den of espionage in Tehran were released on January 21, 1981, minutes after Ronald Reagan was sworn in as president, following lengthy negotiations.

Nabavi said "existing facts prove the opposite" adding that on the bases of Sick's claims the frozen Iranian assets must have been transferred to Iran's account under Reagan administration and arms and military equipment must have been delivered to Iran. "These issues never materialized. On the contrary it was under the Carter administration that dlrs. eight billion of Iran's assets were released and transferred to the Algerian account with a London bank," he told IRNA Friday.

"We wanted the issue of staffs of the den of espionage be settled under Carter administration, of course this was not an attempt to help re-election of Carter in the presidential election. Rather our view was that if not settled, the negotiations must start from the beginning and due to problems in its execution, if we reached no agreement under Carter administration it was not clear if we would have been able to have fresh negotiations with Reagan administration," Nabavi who was also deputy prime minister for executive affairs said.

"Martyr (Mohammad) Beheshti (the then chief justice), Mr. Hahsemi-Rafsanjani (the then Majles speaker) and martyr (Mohammad Ali) Rajaie (the then prime minister) preferred that the American spies be released immediately after materialization of Iran's demands and this was the position of the majority of Majles deputies. However, due to technical and executive problems including refusal to accept our term on making a guarantee and engagement of two American parties in election campaign, our proposal was not dealt with effectively," Nabavi added.

"Contrary to what Mr. Gary Sick has said, staff members of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran had left Iran before Reagan came to the White House and as far as I have heard Mr. Carter was unable to meet them (hostages) in the White House."

Nabavi who has also served as minister of heavy industries and a Majles deputy in post-revolution era, referring to delay on release of the American spies said, "their release was not an issue that could be materialized right after the Majles approval. This called for lengthy and difficult negotiations which took five or six months. The final stage of the negotiations was that we had to take the U.S. claims to international authorities and we had to get the Majles approval for it and we had some negotiations with the Algerians in which we held the view that the condition of Majles is that prior to release of the American spies, all conditions of Iran must materialize and this was not practical from the execution point of view."

"We were after mechanisms so that we would be able to get financial guarantees from the U.S. before the release of the spies and our proposal led to a month-long halt in negotiations and the U.S. Administration launched a massive propaganda to the effect that Iran is demanding dlrs. 450 million from America for each of them (hostages)."

"Before the plane carrying the members of the American den of espionage in Tehran took off, Carter had ordered payment of the Iranian sums."

"Whether Carter would have won the presidential election, if the issue of American hostages had been settled, is not clear. But my personal impression is that Carter

preferred them to be released before the presidential elections because he was thinking that it will affect his votes."

Nabavi totally denied allegations made by Sick that Hojat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi was involved in negotiations and had met with William Casey, campaign manager of Ronald Reagan. Mr Karrubi played no role in the negotiations.

Pakistani Military Official Arrives for Visit

LD2704195591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1700 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohey, chairman of the Pakistani Armed Force's Joint Chief of Staff Committee, and his accompanying delegation, arrived in Tehran today on the invitation of the chief of joint staff of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army. He was welcomed by the chief of joint staff and high-ranking military officials.

Return of Iraqi Planes Depends on Peace Accord

LD2804103291 Tehran IRNA in English 0843 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 28, IRNA—The Iraqi planes which scooted into Iran during the Persian Gulf war will stay put here "until the domestic structure of post-war Iraq is clearer and until such times as Baghdad agrees to sign a comprehensive peace with Iran," according to a Tehran newspaper.

Commenting on the controversy over the Iraqi aircraft in Iran, KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL said if these planes are returned to Iraq "what guarantees are there that they will not be used against Iran or against the Iraqi Shiites in the south towards whom the regime feels special grudge?"

Baghdad's claim on the number of planes that landed in Iran during the war with the U.S.-led allies is at least six times as much as what is said by Iran. But, KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL believed, the number game in the Baghdad-Tehran aircraft controversy "is immaterial."

"What belongs to the Iraqi people belongs to the Iraqi people. This fact has been time and again repeated by the Islamic Republic officials in the course of the post-Persian Gulf war period.

"Consequently the question of their ownership by the Iraqi people is settled. But not the conditions for their return. Despite its weakened and engaged army, Baghdad is again acting hostile both in word and deed toward Iran. This fact has convinced the Islamic Republic not to return these aircraft as long as the climate of ties between the two countries are clouded by hostilities."

Following Iraqi charges that Iran was interfering in its internal affairs in the wake of the people's uprising after Saddam's humiliating defeat in the Persian Gulf war, Tehran-Baghdad relations seem to be strained again. There have again been reports of ceasefire violations, clashes and POW taking. Iran has categorically denied Iraqi charges of intervention in its internal affairs. The Islamic Republic is already host to over million homeless Iraqi refugees who have fled Baghdad's suppressive rule in the wake of the recent uprising in the north and south of the country.

Health Minister Cited on Refugee Situation

LD2704111191 Tehran IRNA in English 1001 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] Orumiyeh, W. Azerbaijan Prov., April 27, IRNA—Iran's health minister here Friday expressed deep concern over the situation of the Iraqi refugees saying "there is an urgent need for hospitals, medical equipment, powdered milk, high-caloried food and sanitary products because contagious diseases are rapidly spreading among the refugees."

Dr. Reza Malekzadeh added, "We welcome any relief aid and with our specialized and experienced staff we can utilize the assistance in the best possible manner."

Speaking to reporters at the end of his visit to the refugee camps in Bakhtaran and West Azerbaijan Provinces which host a huge number of the refugees, the minister regretted that despite efforts of the Islamic Republic, lives of a massive number of the refugees are in serious danger.

Also speaking to reporters, Deputy High Comissioner for the Refugees Mohammad Mokri who accompanied the minister in the visit, said the relief aid of international organizations have been trivial in proportion to the massive influx of the refugees to Iran.

Mokri believed that the refugees' return to their homeland is the best solution to their plight underlining that a single country is in no way capable of handling such a huge number of refugees.

Representative of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Dr. Solayman shared Mokri's view adding the world should work out a solution for return of the refugees to their homeland.

Dr. Sulayman expressed concern over the prospect of the refugees and said that the real and basic needs of the refugees have not yet been well defined.

Deeply moved by the plight of the refugees, the U.N. official praised the Islamic Republic for her generous assistance adding that "Iran is the only country which has put at the disposal of the refugees both her heart and her land."

Yazdi Warns Against Dismemberment of Iraq

LD2904115191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] In today's meeting of judiciary officials, chaired by Mr. Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judiciary, Mr. Yazdi referred to the negligence of the officials of international organizations with regard to the issue of Iraqi refugees. He stressed: These refugees must return to their homes and livelihoods as soon as possible and the issue of providing security for them is very important.

The head of the judiciary explained: Any plan that leads to the dismemberment of Iraq will not be in the interest of any country, especially Iraq, and any measure that harms the territorial integrity of Iraq or Kuwait will not only not solve problems, but will increase them.

Mr. Yazdi referred to the talks between the Iranian and Syrian presidents on the Palestinian issue and noted: The Palestinian issue has an unchanging basis, such that the problem cannot be solved without respect for the rights of Palestinians.

The head of the judiciary also spoke about the Indian Government's treatment of Muslims in that country and said: We advise the Indian Government not to neglect the issue of Muslims, because Muslims throughout the world are following events in Kashmir.

Mr. Yazdi stressed the need to fight drugs, saying: The anti-narcotics battle is based on approved legislation and the punishments, too, are legal. They must continue.

Arrival of U.S. Relief Supplies Reported

NC2804064091 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] An American 437 plane [as heard] carrying more than 70 tonnes of goods for Iraqi refugees landed at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport yesterday afternoon. The consignment was turned over to representatives of the Interior Ministry and the Red Crescent Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran based at the airport to be placed at the disposal of Iraqi refugees.

Khamene'i Names New Pilgrimage Supervisor

LD2604125691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Excerpts] The leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, in an edict, appointed Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mohammad Mohammadi-Reyshahri as his representative and the supervisor of Iranian hajj pilgrims. The text of the edict issued by vali-ye amr [guardian of the cause] of the Muslims is as follows:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Your Excellency Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mr. Haj Shaykh Mohammad Mohammadi-Reyshahri, may you enjoy a long life. It is clear that those familiar with Islamic knowledge, that the duty of pilgrimage to the house of God is one of the tasks in which the numerous and diverse dimensions of an individual's life in relation to his behavior among society are put into practice. The proper performance of these rituals can, therefore, bring him great successes in all material and spiritual arenas. This great duty increases the pilgrims' knowledge by mixing their tour of world countries with exchanges of ideas. It combines worship, submissiveness, pleading, and repentence with endeavor, movement, awareness, and disavowal. Also in this great duty the unity, friendship, and compassion of Muslims are mixed with alertness, vigilance, and avoidance of infidels. During the hajj rituals the state of abondoning the mirage of selfishness to drown oneself in the ocean of a crowd, the instance of sharing your painful secrets with the physician [God] of every hearts' secret, and enquiring like a physician on the ailments of other world Muslims are mixed. And in summary politics are in parallel with religion, and affairs of this world are mixed with those of the next world. This diversity and complexity have always made it necessary to appoint a leader and an illustrious figure to annually supervise the masses of pilgrims to God's House, to assist them toward the source of this divine grace and to quench their thirst. Now that the Iranian pilgrims, with almighty succour and blessing of prayers of the hidden imam, may our souls be sacrificed for him, have once again succeeded in removing the obstacles to attend the public rendezvous of the Muslims to chant the slogan of Abrahamite hajj, I appoint Your Excellency, who is one of the outstanding figures of the Islamic republic with a proud record in the past and who has always been a trusted and courageous and competent administrator for the revolution and its lofty late leader, as my representative and the supervisor of the esteemed pilgrims from Iran. It is expected that through your excellency's guidance and instructions, the esteemed pilgrims will take the opportunity to purify their hearts by worshipping God, thanks to the blessings gained from hajj rituals; and in addition to this, by observing the glory of a large gathering of the Muslims, who have come from every corner of the great Islamic homeland to worship around the Ka'bah, the pilgrims will concentrate their minds and thoughts on Islam's and Muslims' greatness; and may they see with their own eyes the potential that Almighty God has left in trust in the united hands of the Islamic ummah.

The Muslims' negligence of their undiminishing might has always led to a situation where the enemies of Islam and the plunderers of the Muslims' wealth have taken charge of the destiny of the Islamic nations; and at this juncture the sinister hand of the camp of blasphemy and arrogance, led by the tyrannic and hostile regime of America, by resorting to the same means in the Islamic territories, occupies anywhere it wishes and plunders the lives and wealth of the Muslims.

During the hajj rituals, up to the limits of one's capability and possibility, the tie of fraternity with Muslims from other states should be strengthened; and while inquiring about their problems and situation, the certain political facts that are known to the majority or all the people of the Islamic republic should be communicated to them, and the noble verse—that they may witness the benefits of hajj—should be made wary of the enemies' conspiracies; and the experience gained by our revolutionary and selfless nation should be explained to them.

It is necessary that you should bear in mind all the instructions of His Holiness Imam Khomeyni, may God bless his soul, which he issued to his representatives for hajj and pilgrimage in previous years, and you should implement them precisely, and the hajj officials, including the managers appointed by the government, and honorable clergy, the convoy leaders, and all the esteemed pilgrims, are dutybound to obey your excellency's guidance and instructions.

I beseech God to promote the status of our dear imam's soul, the souls of the innocent martyrs of hajj, and other marytrs of the path of justice. May God be with you and may God grant success to you and other esteemed pilgrims. May God's peace and mercy be upon you. [Signed] 11 Shawwal 1411, corresponding to 6 Ordibehesht 1370 [26 April 1991], Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i.

Emami-Kashani Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD2604151891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1133 GMT 26 Apr 91

[Friday prayers sermon delivered by Ayatollah Emami-Kashani at Tehran University on 26 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] I would like to talk about a few points. First, as the life of this revolution continues, this country and its people show themselves to the world for what they really are. [passage omitted]

On the issue of the Iraqi refugees; they have taken refuge to escape the carnage by the irrational and irrate Iraqi regime. They have been oppressed. We can see today's world, one which goes on about civilization and human rights. The standard bearers of human rights—you saw how they coordinated their actions and attacked Iraq over the issue of Kuwait. Of course, the Islamic republic said at the time that it was wrong for the Iraqi regime to enter Kuwait. Over there, they worked hard to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, but this time, they are neglecting over 1 million Muslim refugees. It is clear that human beings are not important, interests are at stake, income is the issue, this is obvious to the world. Of course, the world is based on this. [passage omitted] This is the philosophy of creation. The world must get to know the leaders of arrogance. We recognized the Iraqi regime, but others must get to know it so they do not sermonize about it. Let them see how evil it is.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people passed their test. These are examinations. They sacrifice to donate to the Iraqi refugees. Manual workers and office employees are helping, they give part of their salaries. Every class and strata of the people are helping. [passage omitted]

Muslims of the world are responsible for this issue. They should improve their resources and rush assistance. We are all responsible. The world must be thinking of this: You cannot have one person in his country hold a dagger and treat people like this.

What reply can this world give before God, before history, before nations, before consciences? How clearly have these events clarified truths! How clearly have these events exposed false slogans! How well these events have revealed the sincerity of this country and this system! Their goodness! Their loyalty to their principles which have been stipulated by Islam!

Throughout these events, we have seen that the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution, may God protect him, and the officials of this system have set the direction correctly and have made the nation aware. Fortunately, the nation, of course, is aware and vigilant thanks to the eminent imam, who set society on the correct path, God be praised. Nevertheless, at every juncture, the leadership, too, has set and designated the direction the government undertakes for implementation. [crowds chants]

The stand that the system of the Islamic republic has adopted over such issues, whether about the issue of Iraqi refugees, the occupation of Kuwait, or the invasion by the United States and its allies, or the issue of occupied Palestine, where such misery has been inflicted upon Muslims—and the world is asleep; in this or that corner some Muslims show a bit of movement—and the conspiracy that they have prepared for poor Palestine, planning to make things even worse—I hope that, God willing, they will not succeed. [sentence as heard]

The stands adopted by the Islamic Republic should be seen as exporting the revolution. I want to emphasize this fact about the meaning of exporting the revolution: The export of the revolution does not mean interfering in the affairs of others or in other countries. Our late and eminent imam, may he be admitted to paradise, said in the first year of the revolution: Exporting the revolution means the clarification of Islam throughout the world, the presentation of Islam to the world, with words, in writing, with actions and through the establishment of Iran as an Islamic country. Therefore, the Islamic republic says with all its emphasis that the export of the revolution and the ideals of the revolution means that the country and the greatness of the revolution and Islam, in all its dimensions, pure and true Islam, should be made clear to the world and brought to the world, but no interference in the affairs of other countries is in any way permitted, because exporting the revolution is

through ideas, through the mind, through the growth of nations, and not by force. [passage omitted]

Let me say a word about Labor Day. I venture to say that the labor law, which was approved and communicated to the government of the Islamic republic for implementation, is the best labor law in the world; that is, compared to all the laws, conventions, and programs that all the world's states have for workers. There are some points in the labor law, which make the Islamic republic's laws for workers the most progressive. This is not the place to explain it. This needs a seperate debate, separate discussion for comparing the important points of this law with world labor laws, especially those concerning women and children. The law is extremely refined, progressive, and valuable. I commend all the dear workers to value Labor Day. Basically our community must give due importance to this law. This is one of those laws that can be presented to the world as an explanation of Islamic laws for the workers' sector, in the form of export of the revolution, explanation of the revolution. [passage omitted]

Hostage Release Reportedly To Exclude Germans

NC2904100291 Paris AFP in English 0919 GMT 29 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 29 (AFP)—Iran is limited in its efforts to free Western hostages in Lebanon because of demands their captors have put on certain countries, the TEHRAN TIMES said Monday.

"It is said that any Western hostage release expected soon will exclude Germans because hostages-takers have set conditions about the freeing of the Hammadi brothers from jail in Germany," the English-language daily said.

"Informed diplomatic sources suggest that German Chancellor Helmut Kohl discussed the hostages issue in a recent telephone conversation with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani," according to the daily, which is considered close to the Iranian Government.

Heinrich Struebig and Thomas Kemptner, 30—two Germans belonging to a humanitarian organization—disappeared in Lebanon on May 16 1989.

"Considering the developing situation in the region, it is also understood that Tehran wants to see an overall end to the hostages issue, but it is felt that this depends upon goodwill gestures from the West," it said.

Iranian leaders have complained often that the West has failed to make such gestures.

"It should be emphasised that Iran's influence in Lebanon is not unlimited and faces obstacles considering the demands made by Lebanese groups," the paper said.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal

Three More Killed in Pre-Election Violence

BK2504002091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1844 GMT 25 Apr 91

[Text] Kathmandu, April 25 (AFP)—Three more people have been killed in two separate incidents of election violence preceding Nepal's May 12 polls, party sources said Thursday.

At least one person was killed and seven injured Thursday afternoon when a riot broke out as National Democratic Party (NDP) leader Pashupati Shumshere Rana attempted to hold a public meeting in Lamosangu, 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of the capital, one source said.

Although police later dispersed the crowd, Mr. Rana, a former foreign minister of Nepal's defunct one-party government, was still holed up Thursday night in the house where he sought refuge.

An NDP source said the trouble started when communist activists started throwing rocks at a rally attended by about 500 NDP supporters.

"One of Mr. Rana's followers stabbed one of the activists of the NCP (Nepal Communist Party of the United Marxist and Leninist Factions), which apparently angered the crowd and raised slogans to hand over (Mr. Rana)," the source said.

Party sources also said that two campaigners had been killed elsewhere in the country.

Indra Thebe of the NCP was beaten to death Wednesday at Taplejung, 360 kilometres (225 miles) northeast of Kathmandu, a party source said.

On Tuesday, an NDP worker died in a clash in Serteng village, 140 kilometres (90 miles) northwest of Kathmandu, a Home Ministry spokesman said.

"Rekhaman Tamang was killed in a brawl that started to avenge an old rivalry," the spokesman said.

The three killings brought to 10 the number of deaths linked to election violence since the beginning of March, the spokesman added.

Election Violence Increases

BK2804015591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0132 GMT 28 Apr 91

[By Kedar Man Singh]

[Text] Kathmandu, April 28 (AFP)—As Nepal's first elections in 30 years approach, reports of assaults, riots and murders connected with the campaign have been flooding into the capital.

So far 10 people have been killed and 50 injured in election violence as the rivalry increases between supporters of the three main groups—the Nepali Congress, the National Democratic Party (NDP) and several factions of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

The government is already planning to mobilise some 80,000 security personnel during polling on May 12 and the Nepali Home Ministry has said it is deploying additional personnel in 61 areas earmarked as trouble-prone, a ministry official said.

"The government has already taken the precautionary measure of reinforcing police and Army personnel to meet any contingency," he said.

The violence has led to more mudslinging, with all parties blaming the others' supporters for a campaign that has become increasingly dirty.

Pashupati Shumshere Rana, a former foreign minister under the defunct panchayat government and now a NDP candidate, lashed out at the government Friday for failing to maintain security during the campaign.

Last week, Mr. Rana was forced to take shelter in a farm house after being attacked by a stone-throwing crowd during an election rally in Lamosangu, 80 kilometres (50 miles) northwest of the capital.

Mr. Rana was eventually rescued by armed police after holing up in the house for more than 12 hours but he suffered a further indignity when a roadblock set up by opponents forced him to walk along a mule track for seven hours to get back to the capital.

Sources said NCP and Nepali Congress activists attacked Mr. Rana's rally after a stabbing incident involving an NDP supporter.

More than 1,300 candidates are vying for 205 seats in the House of Representatives in the May 12 elections.

According to many observers campaigning has become increasingly dirty, with accusations of kowtowing to foreign powers a favourite campaign theme among several parties.

The United Marxist-Leninist Branch of the NCP has targetted the Nepali Congress for much of its campaigning, with posters warning voters against "imperialist agents" and "using your vote to sell out your motherland."

Even the royal family, Nepal's rulers under the panchayat system, have come under fire from the left-wing factions, some of which will boycott the polls because they are taking place under a constitution that was not drawn up by an elected assembly.

All the parties are targetting their economic platforms to the poor, with the Nepali Congress claiming that only it "will wipe away the sweat of the bare-footed, ragged peasants."

The NCP has pledged land reform, an increase in educational opportunities for women and support for industries to increase employment in rural areas.

All the parties are putting forward similar foreign policy platforms that will try to maintain good relations with Nepal's neighbours, India and China.

Some 65 observers from 23 countries are to monitor the elections, sources said.

Peasants Party Urges Voting Against Communists

BK2904002691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1737 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Kathmandu, April 28 (AFP)—The chairman of the Nepal Peasants and Labourers Party urged a crowd of villagers near here Sunday to vote against candidates of the largest Communist party faction in upcoming general elections.

Narayan Man Bijukchhe told more than 9,000 villagers at Kirtipur that the Nepal Communist Party's United [NCP] Marxist-Leninist (UML) faction "has acted like a wild elephant by terrorizing the general public."

He accused Agriculture Minister Jhala Nath Khanal, an NCP member, of turning a deaf ear to the interests of peasants.

Nepal's leftist camp is split into nine factions, with the UML the largest of the communist groups. Their opponents are led by the centrist Nepali Congress and the National Democratic Party.

Mr. Bijukchhe, whose Peasants' party is among the nine communist factions, said UML members serving as ministers in the current interim government had betrayed their principles by favouring constitutional monarchy.

His attack was expected to cut into support in Kirtipur for Madan Bhandari, secretary general of the UML who is contesting in the district.

More than 1,300 candidates are vying for 205 seats in the house of representatives in the May 12 elections.

Pakistan

Sharif Says 'No Compromise' on Nuclear Program

BK2704151591 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] The prime minister has expressed his regret and anguish over the ongoing bloodshed in occupied Kashmir and said that Pakistan highly values the great sacrifices being made by the Kashmiri freedom fighters. He was addressing a mammoth public rally in Bannu today. Referring to the just struggle of the freedom fighters in occupied Kashmir, Nawaz Sharif called upon the superpowers to display the same spirit as they did

during the liberation of Kuwait so that the UN resolution on Kashmir is implemented.

On the country's peaceful nuclear program, the prime minister categorically reiterated that no compromise will ever be made on this program. Pakistan will not bow to any external pressure and will not let the national prestige and dignity be impaired.

He expressed the confidence that lawlessness and all social evils will be rooted out with the implementation of the Islamic law.

Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed his government's commitment to fully meet the aspirations and expectations of the people and speedily solve all their problems. He added that concrete steps are being taken to make Pakistan a self-reliant country.

President Rules Out Inspection

BK2904094291 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 29 April 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, April 28—President Ghulam Ishaq Khan today asserted that Pakistan's nuclear programme was research oriented and we would not unilaterally open it for internatioinal inspection.

The President was replying to a question in the background of Ms. Benazir Bhutto's statement in which she emphasised the need for non- proliferation.

The President said he has not seen the former Prime Minister's statement. He said nuclear facilities are not open shops, whereas anybody can walk in and do shopping.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan said there are many countries who are running nuclear research programmes for peaceful purposes or otherwise, and posed the question that have they opened their programme for international inspection. No country runs its nuclear programme openly, he added.

Sharif: Asadabad Will Strengthen Rebel Resolve

BK2704164891 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Excerpt] The prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, has urged the superpowers to show the same enthusiasm in implementing UN resolutions on Kashmir as demonstrated by them in liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. Addressing a big public meeting in Bannu today, he expressed his anguish over the bloodshed in occupied Kashmir and said Pakistan greatly values the sacrifices being given by Kashmir freedom fighters.

The prime minister expressed his deep grief over the massacre of Afghans in the liberated area of Asadabad and said such tactics could not alter the determination of the Afghan mujahidin. He said the brutal action of the Kabul regime had shocked the government and people of Pakistan. Such tactics, he said, would further strengthen the determination of mujahidin. He expressed the hope that the day would not be far off when they would emerge successful in their struggle. [passage omitted]

President on Kashmir, Afghanistan

BK2804113691 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] The president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has said the Kashmir issue, which has soured relations between India and Pakistan, should be resolved in line with the guidelines provided in the UN Security Council resolution. Talking to newsmen in Rawalpindi today, he hoped the uprising would not trigger military confrontation between the two countries. He said the issue should be resolved through accommodation and understanding. The uprising in occupied Kashmir is indigenous and Pakistan has no hand in it.

Replying to a question, the president said the Afghanistan problem should be resolved politically. He said Dr. Najibullah was not acceptable to the Afghan people. Dialogue for finding a solution of the Afghan problem was continuing with all countries which have interest in it.

Earlier, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan inaugurated the Al Sabah Eye Hospital. Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized the need for mobilizing voluntary services for the needy to help establish a true Islamic welfare-oriented society. He said the government has taken steps for the establishment of an Islamic welfare state. However, it is the responsibility of every Muslim to supplement these efforts as envisaged in Islam.

Azad Kashmir President, Premier Discuss Kashmir

BK2804161891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Azad Kashmir President Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan has stressed the need for ideological harmony, faith, and unity to bring the Kashmir freedom movement to its logical conclusion. Addressing the second session of a radio seminar in Muzaffarabad this evening, he said India will have to vacate occupied Kashmir eventually.

Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Mumtaz Hussain Rathod has urged the international community to help resolve the Kashmir issue in the interests of peace in South Asia. In a message read out at a radio seminar in Muzaffarabad today, he said the international community should play a significant and practical role in this issue, as it did to end aggression in Kuwait.

Sri Lanka

Reportage on LTTE Fighting in North

Military Controls Karaitivu Island

BK2704132891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Apr 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, the security forces claim to have taken control of Karaitivu island in northern Jaffna after

two days of fierce fighting. Thirty two persons, including 26 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] militants, were killed in the amphibious attack. The forces assisted by the naval gunboats and air force launched a fresh offensive against the LTTE militants on Thursday [25 April] after imposing an indefinite curfew. Reports say the militants have blown up the causeway, cutting off the island from Jaffna mainland.

Rebels Kill 23 Soldiers, Wound 36

BK2804050291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0452 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] Colombo, April 28 (AFP)—Tamil guerrillas besieging an Army camp killed at least 23 soldiers and wounded 36 others when the troops moved out in a bid to break the blockade, officials here said Sunday.

Dozens of guerrillas from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Saturday fired mortars and rockets at the troops outside the strategic Elephant Pass camp in northern Sri Lanka, a military spokesman here said.

"We don't have details of the fighting there. But 23 of our men were killed and 36 others were wounded," the spokesman said, adding LTTE casualties were not known.

Elephant Pass serves as the main entry point to the Jaffna peninsula, the stronghold of the LTTe and the theatre of some of the heaviest fighting in the past year between government troops and the rebels.

The fighting at Elephant Pass came as soldiers consolidated their positions after routing LTTE guerrillas in two islets—Karaitivu and Kayts—further north and continued to pursue rebels, the spokesman said.

He said troops were in control of the two islets after fierce battles in which at least six soldiers and 26 militants were killed since Thursday.

The LTTE had been dominating the two islands and bombarding the main northern naval base of Karainagar at Karaitivu Island and a small Army camp at Kayts.

"Soldiers found two tractors, a van, five motorcycles and a large number of bicycles inside bunkers. We are distributing the captured food to the civilians," the spokesman said.

The LTTE is currently battling government troops in the island's northeast to establish a separate state for Sri Lanka's two million Tamil minority.

More than 6,580 people have died in bitter fighting since the LTTE resumed its guerrilla campaign in June after 14 months of failed peace talks with Colombo.

47 Killed, 45 Wounded in Fighting

BK2804091591 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 28 Apr 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, 47 persons, including 23 soldiers, were killed and 45 wounded in the continuing fight between the security forces and the LTTE militants in the northeast. Official sources said in Colombo today the casualties occurred when the LTTE militants intensified mortar and automatic gunfire around the army camp at Elephant Pass yesterday. Informed sources put the casualty figure among the LTTE militants at 20.

Meanwhile, school examinations in Jaffna remained disrupted following the ongoing fierce fighting. Students in the Eastern Province also did not turn up at the examination centers because of fear.

125 Rebels, 55 Soldiers Said Killed

BK2904101891 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0915 GMT 29 Apr 91

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Apr 29 (LANKAPUVATH)—Five LTTE leaders were among the estimated 125 terrorists killed as the LTTE was defeated in a major battle which ended Saturday [27 April] at Elephant Pass, official sources told LANKAPUVATH. Twenty five of the dead LTTE cadres were found inside a bus. About 150 terrorists were also wounded as government troops cleared the area of terrorists who had been firing incessantly at the strategic Elephant Pass military camp which controls the main Colombo-Jaffna supply route. The final figure of security forces losses were 25 killed and 50 wounded, the sources said. Seven other vehicles had been captured. The Air Force is continuing to seek and attack more LTTE targets in the Elephant Pass area.

Official sources said a massive counter attack had been launched following 30 soldiers being killed this morning when two patrols were ambushed by terrorists at a point between Nanaddan and Mankalai in Mannar when they were on their way to Thaliddy. Casualties in the ensuing fire fight are not yet known, official sources said. Two soldiers and a civilian driver were killed Sunday at a point between Pulukunawa and Puyangola in the eastern district of Amparai. One soldier succumbed to injuries sustained in an encounter with terrorists at Palugamam, south of Batticaloa.